TELOS

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a quarterly journal of radical thought

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INTRODUCTION

The publication of Solzhenitsyn's Gulag Archipelago *has generated an international debate concerning the meaning of Stalinism, which, strangely enough, has not had much repercussion in the English-speaking world. With the exception of the publication of a few half-baked apologies by notorious party hacks such as Althusser, very little has been done in English. Gouldner's lead article tackles the problem head-on and, rejecting both Cold War interpretations (and more recent fashionable French variations) that see Stalinism as a logical consequence of Marxism, as well as Marxist apologies, which dismiss it as merely a "Russian accident" explainable in terms of backwardness and otherwise insurmountable historical obstacles, discusses it as a case of internal colonialism. It was essentially a matter of property transfer carried out with the help of terror administered by a massive bureaucracy and secret police apparatus. Emphasizing the continuity between Stalinism and the "scientific Marxism" model, Gouldner raises the question of Marxism and Stalinism to a new level.*

The same question, of course, is paramount in France, where the forthcoming March elections pose the possibility of the Left taking power. Again, the international Left's response has been both enthusiastic and uncritical. *What has not been fully examined is the organizational and ideological structure of both the Communist and Socialist parties in France. In an article written well before the collapse of the Common Program and fully corroborated by Carlo's review of Kolm's* The Socialist Transition, *Castoriadis explains why it cannot work. The best that can be expected from a Left victory in France, he points out, is a possible re-politicization of French society. Despite all the recent talk of streamlining, the French Left has not come to terms with its* unchanged *internal structure—hence its lingering bureaucratic and statist outlook whose emancipatory thrust has long since been exposed as totally fraudulent.*

If the situation is bleak in France, things look even worse in the United States. In sharp contrasts with recent appraisals by Plotke (Socialist Review) *and O'Brien* (Radical America) *which ritualistically—and completely out of touch with political realities—foresee the resurgence of socialist forces within the trade unions as well as progress by Leninist groups, Jacoby traces the rapid process of internal disintegration of the U.S. Left in the 1970s. After the end of the dream of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, when the New Left failed to deliver the Utopian goods, the movement's activists turned either to wholly apolitical pursuits (the Jerry Rubin phenomenon), to left liberalism (Tom Hayden), or to surreal underground violence (the SLA or Weather Underground). Today, only a few die-hards remain active in forming ridiculous Stalinoid grouplets that recapitulate the idiocies of the 1930s and 1940s in order to keep the "struggle" alive. To combat these new Stalinists, Jacoby calls for serious leftist intellectuals to overcome their collective social amnesia over Stalinism in order to give serious reconsideration to the meaning of a truly revolutionary Left politics.*

On a more theoretical note, Carlo critically examines current theories of inflation and, after rejecting them, shows that they are unable to explain present problems and hence politically useless. Elaborating the Marxist general theory of inflation and applying it particularly to the Italian situation, Carlo seeks to trace possible developments and appropriate Left responses.

In a wholly different context, Siebert reconstructs Fromm's theory of religion. Part of a continuing series on critical theorists' accounts of religion, this article traces Fromm's ideas from the late 1920s through his involvement with the Frankfurt School, up to the present.

German politics has traditionally had a reactionary tendency. Negt's piece effectively outlines the historical roots of West Germany's turn to increasingly repressive policies.

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In demystifying claims that anti-terrorist legislation and Berufsverbot *are "temporary" aberrations in an otherwise democratic political context, Negt illustrates how conservatism and counterrevolution have plagued the German bourgeoisie and their half-hearted liberalism since the Peasants' War. Zipes furthers Negt's observations, elaborating the long-range political motives behind* Berufsverbot. *Paying special attention to police tactics, public panic over terrorists and their sympathizers, harassment of intellectuals, and the general persecution of Leftists, Zipes' analysis demonstrates how these policies support the solid West German economy and its image as the "democratic keystone" of NATO's defensive arrangements.*

Zukin reports on the Second International Conference on Participation, Workers' Control and Self-Management held in Paris last September. The conference, as it turns out, was widely attended by sociologists and labor union researchers, but few self-managers actually made it. Nonetheless, it did explore several crucial questions—the relation of self-management to the international economy, to political power, to the apathetic working classes, and to the necessary conditions for its realization.

In the other notes, Berman discusses the links in Adorno's aesthetic theory to Marxism, in order both to defend Adorno against his orthodox critics and to criticize the objectivist teleology and inadequate phenomenology, which ultimately rob Adorno's aesthetic theory of its critical powers. Gross traces the development of the ironic style as a widespread malady among Western intellectuals and leftists, leading to their acceptance of chaos and contradictions in life. According to Gross, only a thorough-going ideology critique can free Western society from its ironic paralysis by subsuming it into radical praxis. Last, but not least, Vajda's piece returns to Lukács' "The Role of Morality in Communist Production" to illustrate how ethics can never be drawn from individual interests. Rather, ethics must supplant law as class individuals enact their class ethics in keeping with their class interests.

Tim Luke and Paul Piccone

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STALINISM: A STUDY OF INTERNAL COLONIALISM

by Alvin W. Gouldner

"DZHUGASHVILI, JOSEF VISSARIONOVICH: peasant from the village of Didi-Lido, Tiflis district; born 1881 of Orthodox faith, attended Gori church school and Tiflis theological seminary ...Description: height, 2 arshins, 4½ vershki (about 5 feet, 4 inches), average build; gives the appearance of an ordinary person." *Czarist Police Description of Stalin, May 1, 1904*

The Stalinist past still shapes Soviet society today, even if no longer defining it. Nowhere is this more evident than in the crises of procurement with which Soviet agriculture recurrently beset the Soviet economy. From the October Revolution to *détente*, the peasantry have been a destiny for the Soviet State. This, however, need not have been the case: that "destiny" was a man-made one. If the "thaw" of 1956 was short-lived, this is not surprising considering that it had been ushered in by one of Stalin's closest political associates, the sturdy survivor, Nikita Krushchev. Krushchev's exposé was thus not a critique of the surreal social system whose chief architect Stalin had been, but of Stalin *the man*, his "sickly suspicions," and his "crimes against socialist legality."[1]

Louis Althusser is correct in seeing the profound limits of Krushchev's critique of Stalinism and of any other that merely sees it as a departure from Soviet legality, while overlooking its embedding in the fundamental structures of Soviet society and of the organizational culture of the CPSU.[2] This, however, is a commonplace deemed worthy of public utterance only by those whose life commitments confine them within the inane limits of official Communist discourse, and who, with leaden earnestness, debate whether Stalinism was a "deviation" or merely an "error."[3]

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1. While Stalin's crimes clearly placed him in the super-criminal class, it never occurred to Krushchev that Stalin was to be viewed as one of those ordinary criminals known as statesmen: "Taking the state wherever found," Nock observed, "one sees no way to differentiate the activities of its founders, administrators, and beneficiaries from those of a professional-criminal class."

2. Louis Althusser, *Essays in Self-Criticism* (London, 1975). Translated by Grahame Lock. It is revealing that Althusser manages to miss the humanly liberative character of Krushchev's exposé, which buoyed even Althusser's own project for an anti-humanist Marxism with its quixotic quest for freedom-within-Stalinism. As usual, Althusser presents only programmatic theatrics; never actually presenting his own critique, he allows it to be leaked by his student and translator, Grahame Lock. Thus, he brazenly condemns Krushchev's speech at the 20th Congress of the CPSU as a "critique from the right," reducing it, with his typical "theoreticism," to a *theoretical* diagnosis, thereby missing its liberative character as a *political* act which had the almost immediate consequence of freeing some 5,000,000 political prisoners in the Soviet Union, whose massive presence could not but profoundly affect the entire public atmosphere of the USSR. Moreover, Althusser apparently writes in ignorance of the fact that Khruschev's revelations at the 20th Congress were an impromptu act of great personal and political courage, and that his revelations at the 22nd Congress in 1961, made in open not closed session, were even more damning in their implications than his first talk.

3. See, for example, the depressing piece by that otherwise erudite scholar, Valentino Gerratana, "Althusser and Stalinism," *New Left Review*, January 1977.

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Today an analysis of Stalinism is not an inconsequential exercise. Although it is an historical event, Stalinism is also potentially recurrent. The cruel repression in Cambodia indicates that Stalinism is hardly a dead issue and Kim Il Sung's regime in North Korea is also essentially a personal dictatorship very much along Stalinist lines. While mass arrests and purges have ended in the USSR, repression of all dissent remains. Moreover, Soviet society has never publicly confronted its Stalinist past[4] even to the very modest extent that German society, after W.W. II, confronted its Nazi past, or that American society debated and agonized over the invasion of Viet Nam.

Krushchev's "secret speech" of 1956 before the 20th Congress of the CPSU, in which he denounced Stalin's "cult of personality" was just that—a speech for an elite rather than a public event. The liberation of Soviet and of East European societies under its domination, from the heritage of Stalinism thus remains a world problem.

The discussion of Stalinism has been much conditioned by the recent history of the New Left and the political context of cold war anti-Communist obsessions during the fifties when it was difficult to seek social change without being accused of being pro-Communist. Those, like the New Left, who refused to surrender to the *status quo*, simply had to turn their back on the issue of Communism and refuse to be diverted by it. As a result, the New Left never came to terms with the meaning and sources of Stalinism, so that, when it collapsed in the late 1960s, many of its participants reverted to varieties of old left Stalinism. Of course, even some old left anti-Stalinist socialists have felt that Stalinism was a tacit indictment and an embarrassment to socialism *as such* and preferred not to expose it to public view.[5]

This phenomenon has now ironically spread also to the most conventional and reactionary elements in American life. With the development of *détente* between the Soviet Union and the United States there is a growing vested interest in the sale of American grain and technologies to the USSR. Seeing new

4. Those who consider Stalinism a closed phase of Russian history need only ask dissidents who have been fired from their jobs, placed in insane asylums, denied travel permission, forced into exile, attacked on the streets, or had their apartments ransacked; let them ask Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn, and the writers of the Samizdat. Smith has some pointed commentary on this: "For the greatest moral issue in Soviet history, Stalinism, has been suppressed and, from all outward signs, the youth generation of the seventies is growing up with a severely stunted historical memory of that time. The Party elders have decreed that the Stalinist repressions are a closed book...not to be publicly exhumed....Their sense of moral innocence is as unshaken today as was that of Americans before the awful agony of Vietnam introduced to some a sense of national guilt and capacity for evil. Protecting Russians from that sense, I suspect, is one reason why the Soviet leadership has felt it so terribly important to suppress not just the truth about the Stalinist purges, but also the recognition that millions participated in these bloody repressions." Hedrick Smith, *The Russians*, (New York, 1976), pp. 194, 312.

5. Seeing Stalinism as bad news, socialists may tend to repress any discussion of it even though such discussion is necessary to free socialism and Marxism from its effects. For similar reasons, some sections of even the anti-Stalinist Left became hostile to Solzhenitsyn, condemning his *Gulag Archipelago* for its wrong nationalist and religious sentiments, but often not acknowledging its correct exposure of the Soviet system of labor camps. Cf. Boris Frankel, "The 'Gulag Archipelago' and the Left," *Theory and Society*, I:4 (1974). Here Frankel notes that "as the largest anti-Stalinist Marxist groups in the West, the various Trotskyist organizations are vitally interested in refuting Solzhenitsyn and yet defending Leninism" (p. 487).

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opportunities, powerful American interests tend to accept the present international *status quo* and, as in the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine, even encourage Eastern Europe's submission to Soviet "hegemony." Within this context, discussions of Stalinism also become an embarrassment.[6]

This repression of Stalinism as a topic is not a recent phenomenon. Already in the 1930s the denial of the Stalinist reality was convenient even to a liberal politics, which defined German Nazism as the primary threat and considered an anti-Stalinist critique disruptive of the political unity needed to stop Germany.[7] The repression of Stalinism as a topic thus gathered energies from all regions of the political spectrum and is not confined only to the recent past.

Methodological Considerations

> "The reconstructive philosopher does not stand in judgment as the vanguard of another class. He sees himself within the same situation—as one who must, through his actions and thought, lay bare the colonized relationships and change them."
>
> *Marcus G. Raskin*

The study of Stalinism is also a way of exploring the potentialities and the limits of Marxism as a project for human emancipation contraposed to Stalinism as the very antithesis of that aspiration. Thus, an extended treatment would raise the question of whether Stalinism follows from Marxism itself or whether it was simply a contingent aberration peculiar to Russian culture. Two opposing standpoints have long shaped the dialogue about this issue. One is eager to argue that Stalinism is the inevitable issue of Leninism and Marxism, and uses Stalinism as a stick to beat Marxism. The other, a no less compulsive apology for Marxism, ingenuously denies any connection at all between Marxism-Leninism and Stalinism, even though all Stalinists were proud to call themselves both. We must somehow steer a course between these two compulsions without at the same time pretending that we are some sort of sociological bookkeeper who thinks truth is to be found only in the mid-ground. If Stalinism cannot be understood simply as a child of Marxism, neither can it

6. Thus, when the author of *Gulag Archipelago* came to the United States, he was pointedly refused an interview with (then) President Ford. Indeed, when the book was first published, the broadcasting facilities of the Voice of America hardly mentioned it. In short, elements in the Republican and Democratic Parties find the Russians' Stalinist past an embarrassment to the policy of *détente* with the USSR . That history, and not very ancient history at that, is in the grip of an Orwellian distortion is suggested by President Ford's remarkable statement during the presidential campaign of 1976 that Eastern European countries were *not* dominated by the Soviet Union. On both the political left and right, then, a powerful confluence of forces acts to repress discussion of the Stalinist past and of efforts to understand it.

7. In that vein, Merleau-Ponty wrote shortly after World War II: "If there has to be a choice between a USSR which 'connives with history,' maintains its existence and stops the Germans, and a USSR which sticks to the proletarian line and is crushed in war, leaving future generations with an example of history and fifty years more of Nazism, is it political cowardice to prefer the former case?" Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Humanism and Terror* (Boston, 1969), p. 81. Partly as a result of these pressures, scholarly studies do not come into their own until the cold war period. According to Stephen Cohen: "Academic commentary on the subject began in earnest only after the Second World War, with the expansion of Soviet Studies." Cf. S.F. Cohen, "Bolshevism and Stalinism," in Robert C. Tucker, ed., *Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation* (New York, 1977), p. 6.

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be seen as just a myth cooked up by cold war propagandists to slander Marxism.

Two different tendencies or "schools" of Stalinist historiography have emerged concerning this question. The oldest of these, initiated by Leon Trotsky, conceived of Stalinism as the "degeneration" of the workers' state, a "betrayal" of the revolution, and its Thermidorean halt.[8] Trotskyism's view of Stalinism thus stressed its *discontinuity* with Marxism and Leninism and, far from condemning the latter as the roots of the evil, it presented itself as the truest defender of the faith. In contrast, and as Stephen Cohen points out,[9] there was another, somewhat later interpretation which portrayed Stalinism as a "straightline" outgrowth "fulfillment" and "logical" completion of Marxism-Leninism. This accent on *continuity* expresses a deterministic idealism sharply at variance with the normal paradigm of academic historiography which is emphatically *anti*-deterministic. In this exceptionalism, academic analysts of Stalinism often portray Marxism as a polluting ideology, the magic seed from which Stalinism supposedly grew with inexorability.[10]

The reaction within academic historiography to this vulgar idealism, has in recent years fostered an alternative account which may be called the "social history" paradigm. This paradigm is anti-deterministic; focuses on political processes and structures; minimizes the effects of ideological theoretical commitments, yet stresses the effects of national tradition and culture; tends to have an empiricist character; and emphasizes psychological factors, especially Stalin's character distortions.[11] This account, however, fails to provide a systematic examination of the role of psychological factors in the historical process, is for the most part lacking a collective or social psychology, and fails to explore the social and structural origins of the character pathologies to which it often limits itself. This limited kind of psychopathology also was generally characteristic of Krushchev's analysis of the origins of Stalinism.

The social history paradigm is an articulate dissertation on the dubious relevance of theoretical foresight or political rationality, and a tacit subtextual accent on the forces conducive to social irrationality. It stresses the force of historical circumstances which it counterposes invidiously to ideological

8. See Leon Trotsky, *Stalinism and Bolshevism* (New York, 1937), and *The Revolution Betrayed* (New York, 1937).

9. Stephen Cohen, "Bolshevism and Stalinism," *op.cit.* Cohen's essay is also a brilliantly annotated selective bibliography.

10. It would obviously be in error to assume that everyone who adopts the continuity thesis does so to pillory the antecedents. Thus, under pressure after his 20th Congress speech, Krushchev is reported as remarking at a reception for Chou En-lai on January 17, 1957: "Not only do I fail to see a difference between Stalinism and communism, but I am also of the opinion that Stalin, who as a Communist struggled for the welfare of a certain class, namely the working class, was an exemplary Communist." Cited in Borys Levytsky, *The Stalinist Terror in the Thirties* (Stanford, 1974), p. 7.

11. In the psychological vein, Robert Tucker has spoken of "Stalin's compulsive psychological need, born of neurosis, to prove himself a revolutionary hero of Lenin-like proportions" (*op.cit.*, p. 104). In short, Stalin's "revolution from above" was to have been his October Revolution. Also, Medvedev has written: "I still think that the main motives for this terror were Stalin's inordinate vanity and lust for power." *Ibid.*, p. 220. Lewin has also stressed that Stalin "projected his personality over the nation because. . . this was an expression of his own psychic drives and needs." *Ibid.*, p. 128.

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foresight. As exhibited variously in the work of E.H. Carr, Stephen Cohen, Moishe Lewin and Alexander Rabinowitch, to mention some of the most gifted exponents, the social history paradigm stresses the spontaneity and open-endedness of the Bolshevik response to the historical conditions following the revolution.[12] In this paradigm the Stalinist social system is conceived as the avoidable outcome of unplanned, yet cumulative responses to the "chaos," "pandemonium," or "panic" of the post-revolutionary era. Often, these responses are seen as efforts to meet structural "needs" in the disrupted society—e.g., centralization is seen as a response to the need to facilitate exchange among disconnected parts of the economy—and thus has surprising convergence with Parsonian, Durkheimian, even Michelsian analyses. Bolshevik or Stalinist policies are viewed as the construction of a makeshift system of societal integration to satisfy the most elemental requisites of social order, rather than as the zealous pursuit of revolutionary purpose.

In contrast with this mechanical version of the social history paradigm, Tucker sees responses as having been selected by particularities of Bolshevik history, especially the War Communism years, which he believes left a readiness for a militant, authoritarian voluntarism; he also focuses on elements of Marxist or Leninist theory, or particular features of Russian tradition, especially residual cultural models of state formation and domination. What also needs to be stressed, however, is the influence, not of Marxist theory in general, but of the special reading of Marxism to which the Bolsheviks were prone, as one vital element mediating their reactions to "circumstances." In addition, I would not limit myself to the role of national traditions as a mediating apparatus shaping responses to circumstances, but would attend, perhaps more than Tucker, to structural factors, and the manner in which the actor's location in the social structure also shaped responses to events.

Trotsky's interpretation of Stalinism is also helpful, but only insofar as he generally highlights the role of the bureaucracy. He is much less persuasive when he deals with the question of whether or not the bureaucracy is a true social class (in the Marxist sense). Here Trotsky's Marxism fastens on the defining significance of "ownership" of the means of production, but fails to weigh the significant distinction between ownership and control. Thus he obfuscates rather than illuminates the actual power position of the bureaucracy by clinging to empty legalisms in which the Soviet Union is seen as a "workers' state," albeit "degenerated," since the bureaucracy did not really "own" the means of production.

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12. Thus, Carr held that Stalin's aims were "dictated by the dynamic force inherent in the revolution." Cf. E.H. Carr, *Socialism in One Country, 1924-26*, Vol. 1 (London, 1959), p. 177. Lewin maintained that in "the hungry and anguished years of 1920-21...the elements of a solution were suggested by circumstances rather than theoretical anticipation." (in Tucker, *op. cit.*, p. 113). Rabinowitch portrays the Bolshevik Party of the October Revolution as flexible and open to mass movements and sentiments, counterposing this view tacitly to Lenin's theory in *What Is to Be Done?* which had stressed the need for a small centralized group of "professional revolutionaries." Cf. Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The 1917 Revolution in Petrograd* (New York, 1976).

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Generally, social and political analysis gains more from careful theoretically refined case studies of concrete social and political pathologies, including Stalinism, than from grand theories of emancipation whose historical function is the provision of *Weltanschaaungen*. The quest for a grand theory of emancipation has thus far yielded only the most trivial banalities—e.g., the incompatibility of coercion and rationality—and it has commonly proceeded by an elaborate scholasticism, an interpretation of other texts producing endless commentaries.[13] Thus the following study will assume that social theory should focus on the development of empirically grounded case studies of critical historical episodes, rather than on encyclopedic textual reinterpretations, or on merely logical deduction of the supposed requisites of emancipation. Furthermore, these case studies should stay in close touch with guiding theories of social-political pathologies and emancipation, that are developed cumulatively in intimate association with those case studies.

Defining Stalinism

> "But whatever form they have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, viz., the exploitation of one part of society by the other."
> *Communist Manifesto*

An analysis of a concrete historical phenomenon such as Stalinism can proceed effectively only on the condition that it be treated *not* as a totally unique event but is, rather, deliberately related to certain types of events; in this way, openings are created between the unique event and (potentially illuminating) general theory. Every analysis of even the most idiosyncratic historical event is always a dialectic, open or occluded, between the concrete and the abstract, between historical particulars and more or less abstract theories. At first sight, Stalinism seems to consist of a series of events that have taken place in the USSR. But without specifying what we think Stalinism is, we cannot claim that it occurred only there, and still less *when* it began and when it *ended*—if indeed it did end. In short, we must begin by risking a conception of Stalinism and by specifying some of its general analytical dimensions. In an older idiom, we would ask: what is the "essence" of Stalinism? But this would imply that the essence of Stalinism is given to us by history rather than being *constructed* in some transaction between the analyst and the historical situation. Ultimately, it is shaped *both* by what happened in history and by the analyst's long-range interests and short-range theoretical commitments. The question, then, is what general attributes of Stalinism we choose to examine, assign special significance to, and attempt to understand. In this vein we propose a preliminary definition of Stalinism as a systematic regime of terror aimed at bringing about a property transfer, where private property (used for productive purposes) is supplanted by state property. In short, Stalinism is seen as a regime of terror[14] aiming at the collectivization of property, where the

13. What can grand theories of emancipation do? They have not and cannot provide useful guides to empirically grounded social analysis, any more than to political practice. And, of course, they cannot serve as substitutes for such studies, although this is how they often function today.

14. I thus concur fully with Isaac Deutscher who observed that "...the root difference

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surrogate of the collective group to whom the property is transferred is the state. As such, Stalinism necessarily also meant a burgeoning bureaucracy, needed both to expropriate the old owners and to administer the newly expropriated property. As a systematic regime of terror, Stalinism has a contradictory relation to the "vanguard party" and to the state bureaucracy in that they are both its instruments as well as some of the central targets of its terror. Stalinism is thus further characterized by the existence of an ambivalent relation between party and bureaucracy, on the one side, and, the supreme leader of the regime who functions as a personal dictator crushing dissent against his regime.

Thus, to understand Stalinism entails an understanding of (1) *regimes of terror*[15] and the conditions under which they flourish or fade, i.e., a contribution to a generalized theory of terror; (2) the relation between the regime of terror and *the property transfer*; (3) why leadership of the regime of terror takes the form of a personal *dictatorship*; and (4) why there is the burgeoning of a *bureaucracy* which serves as both historical agent and historical scapegoat of the supreme leader. Stalinism was a mode of governance that relied on a systematic regime of terror in furtherance of a property transfer,[16] and our hermeneutic of Stalinism would require us to formulate certain general considerations on terror, property transfers, personal dictatorships, and state bureaucracies, in their mutual interrelations, in order to illuminate Stalinism as a unique historical happening. Obviously, however, this undertaking greatly exceeds the limits of any single paper and I will limit myself to certain aspects of Stalinism as a regime of terror in its connection with a property transfer.

Stalinism as Internal Colonialism

> "...the clash that occurred was one between what were almost two nations or two civilizations, profoundly different in modes of production and modalities of organization, in *Weltanschauungen* and in religion (the one stubbornly religious, the other as stubbornly anti-religious)." *Moishe Lewin*

Between 1929, the year when the forced collectivization of Soviet agriculture began, and 1939, a year after the last Moscow purge trial, about twenty million Soviet citizens were killed. They were shot, or died of famine, disease or exposure, directly resulting from the punitive actions of the Soviet government. The tragedy begins with the Soviet assumption of power in 1917 in a predomi-

between Stalinism and the traditional socialist outlook lay in their respective attitudes toward the role of force in the transformation of society." Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin, A Political Biography* (London, 1949), p. 343.

15 The term comes from E.V. Walters who contrasts it with "sieges of terror" against constituted authorities. See Walters' splendid *Terror and Resistance* (London, 1969).

16. Our own specification of Stalinism is convergent with, though significantly different from, Stephan Cohen, who defines Stalinism as *generalized* "extremism": "Stalinism was not simply nationalism, bureaucratization, absence of democracy, censorship, police repression and the rest in an unprecedented sense...Instead, Stalinism was excess, extraordinary extremism, in each. It was not, for example, merely coercive peasant politics, but a virtual civil war against the peasantry; not merely police repression or even civil war-style terror, but a holocaust by terror

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nantly peasant society. According to the Census of 1897, there were then in Russia some 2.5 million industrial workers, 1.25 million soldiers, 1 million bureaucrats, 17,000 students and 100 million peasants. These statistics exhibit the fundamental demographic and ecological conditions within which Stalinism first began to grow. They show that when the CPSU seized state power it could only have been the rule of a tiny isolated elite, a "substitute" proletariat, dedicated ideologically to a real but slim proletariat in a society overwhelmingly peasant. Tensions between the peasantry and the revolutionary state begin to heighten during the Civil War when the peasants became the mass basis, if not the elite troops, of the Red Army as they had been under the Czar: "...When the Civil War got under way, the Soviet regime rapidly lost most of the good-will it enjoyed among the peasant masses, because of the ravages of the war itself, the grip of the *Entente* blockade, and because of the inexorable necessities of food procurement; compulsory grain deliveries were born not with collectivization but with war communism. Trotsky expressed the truth with brutal honesty when he later said: 'We plundered all Russia to conquer the Whites.' The result was expectable. Henceforward, the Revolution fought for its existence in a countryside ever more denuded of sympathy for it...By the very end of the war, after strenuous efforts, the percentage of proletarian soldiers in it was only 15-18 percent. The rest were peasants, most conscripted...Desertions from the Red Army were massive... In the single year of 1919 alone, there were no less than 2,846,000 deserters."[17] While the Party sought to encourage class war in the countryside and to mobilize the rural poor and middle peasants against the kulaks, this policy failed and the "committees of the poor" were soon disbanded.[18]

However much the CPSU sought to mobilize the middle and poor peasantry and ally them with the proletariat, this "alliance" was plainly intended to be under the hegemony of the proletariat, to whom the CPSU gave its first

that victimized tens of millions of people for 25 years; not merely a Thermidorean revival of nationalist tradition, but an almost fascist-like chauvinism; not merely a leader cult, but deification of a despot...Excesses were the essence of historical Stalinism." In Tucker, *op.cit.*, p. 12. Yet, if Stalinism is excess, we also need to specify analytically, excess of *what*? Once this is done, by "factoring" out the various concrete excesses which Cohen mentions it is plain that the main factor is an excess of "terror," while an auxiliary analytic component is personal dictatorship. The first, main factor is incorporated in what we have called a systematic "regime of terror." But if we simply define Stalinism as this, as "excess" or as personal dictatorship, then it loses its historical specificity and can be found many places, including, as E.V. Walters indicates, the Zulu empire. The fundamental omission in Cohen's specification of Stalinism is his failure to associate this regime of terror and personal dictatorship with a *mass property transfer*. It is this conjuction that has to be explained, not terror and dictatorship in general.

17. "Introduction to Tukachevsky," *New Left Review*, May-June 1969, p. 80.

18. As Teodor Shanin remarks: "The attempts by the government to split the peasantry and establish a Bolshevik foothold among the poor failed...in spite of the socio-economic differentiation... Russian villages went on showing remarkable political cohesiveness and unity of action...for the whole period 1905-30...and although the Russian peasants had almost uniformly opposed the 'Whites' in 1918-19...by the end of 1920 they were in active and passive revolt." See Teodor Shanin, "Socio-Economic Mobility and the Rural History of Russia 1905-30," pp. 10, 6-7, 8, an unpublished manuscript that is an amended version of his article in *Soviet Studies*, 23:2 (1971). For the full discussion and evidence, see T. Shanin, *The Awkward Class* (London, 1972).

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commitment. In turn, the proletariat was to be "led" by "its" vanguard, the CPSU itself.[19] Stalin, of course, took pains to argue that "in *every one* of these cases where Lenin speaks of the 'dictatorship of the Party' *in relation to the working class*, he means not dictatorship in the actual sense of the term ('power based on violence') but the leadership of the Party."[20] But while the thrust of Lenin's position had been to enlarge the peasantry's importance in the theory and practice of Bolshevism, Stalin's emphasis was in the opposite direction.

Not regarding the peasantry as a reliable political ally, but scarcely having a proletariat of its own to "lead" (especially after its decimation and exhaustion following the Civil War), the CPSU was radically isolated. At first largely dominated by highly educated revolutionary intellectuals of predominantly urban origins, the party leaders barricaded themselves in the towns and cities against the rising resistance of the vast rural majority. The fundamental structure, then, was not simply one of a "differentiation" between town and country, but of a sharp and growing cleavage between them. What had been brought into being was an urban-centered power elite that had set out to dominate a largely rural society to which they related as an alien colonial power; it was an internal colonialism mobilizing its state power against colonial tributaries in rural territories.

Here, internal colonialism refers to the use of the state power by one section of society (the Control Center) to impose unfavorable rates of exchange on another part of the same society (e.g., the Subordinate Remotes), each being ecologically differentiated from the other. The control center governs by using the state to impose unequal exchange through decisions governing capital allocations, investments, prices and price controls, access by visitors, taxes, tax exemptions and deductions, credit, loans, labor drafts, military conscription, rates of interest, wages, tariffs, customs duties, access to education, passports and visas, and electoral representation. Where these routine mechanisms fail, the control center uses force and violence against the remote subordinates.

The two regions may share much the same culture and language, but they have different versions of it, the Center defining its own culture and dialect as "high" and the periphery's as "low." In terms of Robert Redfield's distinction, the Center defines its own culture as part of the "great Tradition" while deprecating the periphery's as the "Little Tradition." Peasants in Russia were often seen by the Center as unenlightened, backward, suspicious of outsiders

19. As Stalin remarks in his *Problems of Leninism*, "the fundamental question of Leninism, its starting point, its foundation, is the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat... Of course, the peasant question, as the question dealing with the ally of the proletariat, is of the greatest significance to the proletariat, and forms a component part of the basic problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat... [but] if Leninism were not faced with the practical problem of the conquest of power by the proletariat, then the question of an alliance with the peasantry would not arise..." Joseph Stalin, *Problems of Leninism* (San Francisco, 1934), pp. 11-12.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 56. Stalin's reassurances, of course, were worthless. What it came down to was precisely what Stalin had denied, i.e., the dictatorship of the Party over the working class and peasantry alike, and in the very sense he had also denied, i.e., as power over them based on force and violence. Neither Leninism nor Stalinism regarded the peasantry as a reliable political ally; Stalin, for example, remarked that "it is true of course that the peasantry, by its very position, is not socialistic."

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and of constituted authority, unruly, undisciplined, and anarchistic. This was a contempt which the Bolsheviks shared and expressed by characterizing peasants as petty-bourgeois, individualistic, narrow, venal, property obsessed, much as Marx himself had earlier condemned "rural idiocy." The Russian peasantry under Czarism were essentially living in a political ghetto,[21] the remote object of politics and public policy rather than its master. In the system of internal colonialism that continued under the Soviet State, as Preobrazhensy and Bukharin observed in *The ABC of Communism,* "the electoral arrangements of the Congress of Soviets are of such a nature, that, proportionately to their numbers, the urban workers have more delegates than the peasants...These constitutionally specified privileges merely give expression to what actually exists, namely that the solidly organized urban proletariat leads the disorganized rural masses." [22]

To the present day, access to plumbing, paved roads, consumer goods, and education vary directly with closeness to a city. Pensions and labor rates are less in the countryside than in the cities. Indeed, it was only in 1975 that the Soviet Government allowed, in principle at any rate, peasants to be given the same passports required for internal movement and available to others. What Moishe Lewin has so aptly called "this peculiar socialism without the peasant, a deeply anti-muzhik system transforming the whole peasantry into a legally and factually discriminated class, the lowest in the social ladder," is precisely what we have termed, internal colonialism.[23]

Great and Little Traditions

The new Soviet State was at first controlled by an urban-based elite, preponderantly Russian and in part Jewish, whose advanced education, cosmopolitan travel and culture, and town origins were basically alien to the

21. Peasant religion differed from that of the city-dwellers, devolving around the homestead cult to which the priest had to come, commonly dissented from state sanctioned orthodoxy, and was generally resistant to hierarchy and bureaucracy. Cf. Lewin in Tucker, *op.cit.,* pp. 120ff. "The rural milieu in Russia during the course of Russian history, and still so during the NEP, had all the traits of a distinct social system, set quite apart from the rest of society..."

22. N. Bukharin and E. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism* (London, 1922), p. 186. This unequal electoral arrangement was eliminated in the "Stalin Constitution" of 1936 at the height of the purges.

23. The analytic value of the notion of internal colonialism is that it is a step toward bridging the radical distinction commonly perceived between so-called international relations and internal social relationships, relations between states and those between classes. This enables what has been learned in one domain to be applied hypothetically to the other. One of the most interesting discussions of this is to be found in Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism, The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966* (Berkeley, 1975). See especially his discussion on pp. 8ff., where Hechter notes the use of cognate concepts in Lenin's *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* and Gramsci's "The Southern Question." See also Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, *Sociologia de la Exploitacion* (Mexico City, 1969), especially "El Colonialismo Interno," pp. 221-250. The theory of internal colonialism as outlined here is also convergent with the theory of unequal exchange. The basic contributions to this within the idiom of Marxist political economy have been made by Arghiri Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange, A Study of the Imperialism of Trade* (London, 1972), and Samir Amin, *Unequal Exchange, An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism* (London, 1976). My own interest in the problem of unequal exchange is rooted in my work on reciprocity. See my "The Norm of Reciprocity," *American Sociological Review,* April 1960, republished in *For Sociology* (Harmondsworth, 1975).

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vast rural majority united in resistance to them, but whom they remained determined to rule. Thus, the transition from Leninism to Stalinism may be conceived, partly as a readjustment of the Soviet elite, such that its new composition was no longer so different from the Soviet people. In comparison to Lenin's Old Bolsheviks, the Stalinist Elite had relatively less education, were less well traveled, less cosmopolitan, less likely to come from the urban and national centers, and were more likely to be provincials rooted in the countryside, were less Russian, certainly less Jewish, and more anti-Semitic.[24]

The implications of this shift in the background of the Soviet elite, in the transition from Leninism to Stalinism, are ironical: the core cadres of "totalitarian" Stalinism more faithfully reflect the character of the Soviet population than did those of "democratic" Leninism.

There are at least two theoretical traditions within which this shift can be analyzed. One is an old small group tradition of leadership research, particularly its effort to relate the "traits" of leaders to those of the group members. One of the recurrent findings was that those who became or remained leaders were more likely, than those who did not, to resemble the average members of the group. Apparently, even socially prized qualities such as intelligence may impair a person's ability to assume or retain leadership if they diverge too far from the group's norm. It is not, in brief, the "smartest" person who becomes the "class" leader or who remains such.

Divergences between the characteristics of leaders and those of their group may impair the ability of leaders to take the role of followers (even if only for instrumental purposes), as well as leaders' ability to serve as objects of identification for the membership. Deviant characteristics may thus undermine the leaders' authority and effectiveness. From this standpoint, Stalinism may be seen as a mechanism of adjustment, reducing the distance between the Bolshevik leaders and the Soviet masses and thus facilitating the leaders' ability to structure group action. This may be relevant to an understanding of the situation which developed under Stalinism. After all, the brutal measures associated with Stalinism were not simply executed by Stalin, Molotov, or a few other supreme leaders; they necessarily required the willing cooperation of a significant section of the Soviet population (which may explain why Russians have not confronted their Stalinist past.) Furthermore, it

24. This in short was the changing demography at the top leadership level that was emerging from perhaps 1930 onward, particularly among those whom W.E. Mosse calls the "new Bolsheviks." "The 'New Bolsheviks' are sharply differentiated from other groups. Almost three-quarters are from peasant stock. Half originate either from the borderlands or from outlying provinces of the empire... Over a third are of non-Russian extraction. (The Jews, however, are reduced to one, Karl Radek.) Socially, members of the group are evenly divided between those of middle and lower class extraction. This background is reflected also in their education... Over 40 percent have an elementary education only... The 'New Bolsheviks' represent a distinct social stratum, the petty bourgeoisie of the outlying parts of the empire, men of peasant stock. The intelligentsia element, prominent although never predominant in the remaining groups, is virtually absent (except for Radek and Rakovsky)." W.E. Mosse, *Slavonic and East European Review*, 1968, pp. 146-148. For a brief discussion of the social origins of early revolutionary leaders in the USSR, China and Cambodia, see my "Prologue to a Theory of Revolutionary Intellectuals," *Telos* 26 (Winter 1975-76), esp. pp. 4-8.

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helps explain how Stalinism won popular support, and that it was not kept in power just by terror; this support was real and when Stalin died in 1953, millions of Russians were genuinely grieved, and to this day there are various indications of an abiding nostalgia for Stalin. Finally, Stalin's personal popularity could be turned against the CPSU itself, and helps explain the development of his personal dictatorship.

The second useful theoretical standpoint was formulated by Redfield who distinguished between so-called written, "great traditions" borne by urban elites, and so-called "little traditions" borne orally by folk cultures.[25] Originally, Marxism was a typical product of a "great tradition" generated and transmitted by literate, urban, and highly educated elites. It was a product of the most modern European educational and publishing systems, of European literacy, and of a burgeoning urbanism. Like every great tradition, Marxism faced the problem of translation and accomodation when carried into the oral culture of the hinterlands (whether of urban slum and factory culture or of the rural backcountry), and when it sought to win acceptance from workers and peasants. Any "great tradition" is subject to immense pressures to transform itself, if the central elite bearing it wishes it to be understood and accepted by those at the peripheries,[26] but this adjustment is often viewed by the orthodox at the Center as a profanation.

The "betrayal" of the Soviet Revolution, denounced by Trotsky, was precisely the declaration of such a profanation. Even earlier, Lenin himself had warned against such dangers, observing in his *What Is To Be Done?* (1902), that the working class did not spontaneously generate a socialist consciousness but only a trade union "economism" from which socialist theory had to be protected. Essentially the authoritarian hierarchy of the Bolshevik Party, with its control firmly lodged in the hands of a theoretically trained leadership

25. Robert Redfield, *The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago, 1960). Redfield's use of this distinction embodies an unreflective elitism; my own, however, I hope, entails irony.

26. Obviously, however, this is no new problem that Marxism alone encountered, nor is it peculiar to the diffusion of political culture. It is an old problem that the church fathers and priestly functionaries encountered early as they sought to win followers among adherents of "pagan" religions. In short, a great tradition must inevitably bend to the little tradition in the very process of imposing itself. It can never call for "unconditional surrender." But elites bearing the great tradition commonly regard such a transformation as a profanation and "distortion" of the great tradition. For a creative application and important extension of Redfield, see James C. Scott, "Protest and Profanation: Agrarian Revolt and the Little Tradition, I," *Theory and Society*, 4:1 (1977), and Part II, 4:2 (1977). Since my concern here is with Stalinism in the USSR, I necessarily focus on the gulf between the majority of Soviet citizens, who were peasants, and the "Old Bolsheviks." Yet the distance between the latter and industrial workers was also immense and, indeed, it was *that* difference which affected the organization of the Bolshevik Party, as I suggest below. I am grateful to Paul Breines for reminding me of the relevant discussion of "popularization," in the context of an advanced industrial society, by Gunther Roth, *The Social Democrats in Imperial Germany* (Totowa, N.J., 1963). Obviously, however, if the gap between industrial workers and Marxists is substantial, and exerts unremitting pressure for adaptive change in Marxism, how much greater must be the pressure exerted on Marxism by a peasantry who came into contact with it. "Maoism" was obviously an adaptation to that great tension between the culture of the peasantry and urbane Marxism. Redfield's theory is helpful here because it provides a systematic basis for seeing and conceptualizing that gap between Marxism and a peasantry.

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expressed the profound fear that such a "profanation" was a continual danger. Lenin's struggle to protect "revolutionary theory" by organizing an elite of "professional revolutionaries" expressly premissed that "the spread of Marxism was accompanied by a certain deterioration of theoretical standards,"[27] which is to say, a doctrinal degradation. The history of the diffusion of Marxism in Russia may be read as one in which Plekhanov, Lenin, and Stalin were successive decompression chambers, each providing the step-by-step accomodation of Marxism to Russian culture, to the mass oral tradition, and to the little traditions of the "provincial" cultures at the peripheries.[28] Stalin's policy of "Socialism in one country" was in part an effort to compensate for the revolution's failure to link up with supporting revolutions in advanced industrial societies in Central Europe, and to overcome the Bolshevik's radical isolation from the Soviet people, by retreating to the populism of the little traditions, mobilizing them on behalf of the new state. Like all great traditions encountering a vigorous little tradition, however, it paid a substantial price for such accomodation as it achieved.

It would be oversimplifying greatly, however, to view Stalinism only as the accomodation of a great tradition to the little, or, as Nicholas Vakar does, as the peasantization of Bolshevism.[29] Bolshevik culture also competed with other *great* traditions that were urban, national and religious. The Orthodox Church and Great Russian nationalism were not just little traditions. It would, however, be no less oversimplified to characterize Stalinism as the Russification of Bolshevism. Even in 1939 the Politburo included two Georgians (Stalin and Beria), an Armenian (Mikoyan) and a Jew (Kaganovich). Moreover, the generally dwindling presence of Russians at the top levels surely cannot be interpreted as evidence of Russification. The Russian Stalinists were, in addition, no more conventional Russians than Karl Marx was a conventional Jew. The political culture these Russians bore was not only against Ukrainian nationalism but, at one level, was also generally anti-nationalist and even anti-Russian. Which is not to say that at the level of everyday life they did not also bear certain traditional Russian prejudices, not the least being anti-Semitism. (It is at this level that the Bolsheviks were sometimes perceived as the "Russian" faction and thus differentiated from the Mensheviks, who were often seen as the "Jewish" faction.)

In viewing the Russian revolution as bringing the Bolsheviks into interaction

27. V.I. Lenin *What Is to Be Done?* (New York, 1929), p. 27.

28. Plekhanov had tacitly situated his adaptation of Marxism in cosmopolitan assumptions and urban settings. Although Lenin had instrumentally incorporated the peasantry into Bolshevik strategy, the Party's actual penetration of the hinterland remained very limited and was further limited by the adoption of the New Economic Policy (NEP). Stalinism accomplished that penetration in depth. It was Stalinism that committed itself to establishing Bolshevik rule in the countryside at the level of the everyday life, which accommodated to its anti-cosmopolitan provincialism, and whose energies it co-opted to overcome the isolation of the Soviet Revolution.

29. Cf. N. Vakar, *The Taproot of Soviet Society* (New York, 1961). Again, compare Roy Medvedev's critique of Agursky's argument, which holds that Stalinism was a reaction of a vast Slavonic country to the internationalist, cosmopolitan experiments of the 1920s and 1930s, which ignored the national factor. In Tucker, *op.cit.*, pp. 220ff. See M.A. Agursky, "Birth of Byelorussia," *Times Literary Supplement*, June 30, 1972.

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with Old Russian culture at the village level, it must also not be forgotten that their village culture was quite distinct from the Great Russian culture characteristic of the cities if, for no other reason, because of the villages' anti-bureaucratic and anti-hierarchic tendencies. Stalinism, then, was not just the Russification of Soviet life; for there was a level at which the Russian people's own culture and national identity was as alien to Bolshevik tradition as was the Ukrainian nationalism they condemned as a "petty bourgeois deviation."[30]

From Collectivization to the Purges

As early as 1847 Friedrich Engels argued that the Communist Revolution "will take a longer or shorter time to develop, according to whether industrial life has attained a high degree of evolution, has amassed great wealth, and has a considerable quantity of the forces of production at its disposal." In a letter of 1874, Engels had excluded the possibility of a direct transition to socialism in Russia, but Marx later issued an easement against Engels' determinism. Still, this liberalization (in Marx's letter to Vera Zasulich of 1881) made it emphatically clear that, even if Russia could then move toward Socialism, this could happen only on the condition that her revolution coincide with one in the West from which it could secure material assistance. Advanced industrialization, or access to it, remained decisive for Marx's socialism. However, the revolutionary momentum in post-World War I Europe soon subsided with the defeat of uprisings in Germany and Hungary, thus leaving the revolution in Russia isolated and with no clear precedents to go by except a scientific Marxism positing an advanced industrialization as indispensable for socialism.

After the devastation wrought by World War I, the October Revolution and the ensuing Civil War, the Soviet economy was wasted and disrupted, while its populace, peasantry and working class alike, were exhausted. It was in this context that the CPSU declared the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1921, which allowed private ownership to develop the economy. Stephen Cohen and Charles Bettleheim have both shown the untenability of the conventional view of NEP—i.e., as a tactical concession or temporary retreat to recharge the economy. It may be that Lenin first viewed NEP as a breathing space,[31] but he soon changed direction and came to look upon NEP as a bridge into socialism that, rather than being scrapped at the first sign of improvement, would have to be developed. Lenin's sharp about-face toward an outright gradualism congenial to cooperatives and communes, which he now saw as the building blocks of socialism, was a tribute to his political acumen and flexibility. But it also came at a time when, due to his illness, his energies and political influence

30. Tucker grasps the resultant complexity well when he observes that Stalinism entailed an amalgamation of cultures that "paradoxically involved at once the full-scale Sovietization of Russian society and the Russification of Soviet culture," so that in the end the Russian nation and its nationalism is left no more intact than that of other nationalities in the USSR. Cf. Tucker, *op.cit.*, pp. 101-102.

31. Cf. Cohen: "Lenin frankly presented the new economic policies to his followers as a retreat born of the failure of war communism." Steven F. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution* (New York, 1973), p. 132, and especially Chapter 4, "Rethinking Bolshevism." See also Charles Bettleheim, *Les Luttes de Classes en URSS: Deuxième Periode, 1923-1930* (Paris, 1977).

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were waning within the Bolshevik Party. Moreover, the fact remains that many Bolsheviks continued to view NEP as a temporary expedient. There were many old Bolsheviks, and not simply inexperienced new recruits who had had their political paradigms shaped by the Civil War with its voluntaristic "storming ahead" and its authoritarian intervention.[32] The destiny of NEP, then, was less to be shaped by the new wisdom of Lenin than the older political norms abiding in the Party that he had forged. In the end, the fate of NEP would depend on what that institution had become by reason of its theory, its political culture, and its historical situation.

In about three years, much of the destruction of the economy had been repaired under NEP so that plans could be debated as to how further to develop it along socialist lines. At this point, the Party was subject to pressure by the Left to begin a rapid industrialization of the Soviet Union and/or to encourage revolutionary movements in Western Europe. For industrialization, however, capital was needed. Since foreign credits had been cut off after the Bolshevik government repudiated the Czarist debt in 1918, capital accumulation had to come from native resources. Ideally, the solution to this problem was to reduce peasant effective demand, thereby easing the burden on the crippled industrial sector, while also controlling any inflationary tendencies and generating the capital, or the surplus available for capitalization, needed for Soviet industrialization. The one tactic that could accomplish these objectives was to turn the terms of trade against the peasants, thus exploiting them for what Preobrazhensky called "primitive socialist accumulation."[33] But it also raised the specter of intensified peasant resistance (already frighteningly foreshadowed by the 1920-1921 Tambov Rebellion)[34] which might starve the urban centers and constrict the very agricultural surplus needed to capitalize

32. Cf. Tucker, *op.cit.*, pp. 91ff. Tucker's thesis is that Stalin and many of his generation had been shaped by their experience in the Civil War, which left them with a paradigm of political method that they tabled only temporarily during the NEP. The heritage of the Civil War, Tucker argues, "was martial zeal, revolutionary voluntarism, and *élan*, readiness to resort to coercion, rule by administrative fiat, centralized administration, summary justice, and no small dose of communist arrogance...that Lenin later inveighed against" (p. 92).

33. The main account of "primitive socialist accumulation" was outlined in 1924-25 by E. Preobrazhensky in his *The New Economics* (London, 1965). While there is surely an analogy between Preobrazhensky's "primitive socialist accumulation" (which he distinguishes from *routine* socialist accumulation) and Marx's "primitive *capitalist* accumulation," there was in principle no *identity* between them, not only in that the latter furthered capitalism while the former aided socialism, but because Preobrazhensky expressly renounced certain methods of primitive capitalist accumulation (e.g., looting and plunder) as forbidden by socialist principle. This accumulation was to be accomplished through Party control of the State apparatus, which enabled it to use various administrative devices to turn the terms of trade against the peasantry. In effect, Preobrazhensky's was a deliberate policy of internal colonialism in which "exploitation" of the peasantry was expressly foreseen. While rejecting looting, in principle, Preobrazhensky held that "the idea that a socialist economy might be developed without tapping the resources of the petty bourgeois and, above all, of the peasantry can only be described as a reactionary petty bourgeois daydream." Cited in Moishe Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power* (London, 1968), p. 150. Obviously, however, once Soviet agriculture had been collectivized, what was involved was not the exploitation of pre-socialist forms but of a socialist system and it cannot, then, be characterized as "primitive socialist accumulation," in Preobrazhensky's sense. It is more accurately described as an internal colonialism.

34. Cf. Oliver H. Radkey, *The Agrarian Foes of Bolshevism* (New York, 1958).

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industrialization.

Believing that intensive Soviet agriculture would produce more effectively than the old, and thus yield a bigger surplus, Preobrazhensky saw the latter as being "tapped" rather than plundered by the state. Instead of entailing a prior collectivization, he foresaw the long continuation of private farms and, like other Bolsheviks, presumably envisioned a voluntary socialization of agriculture. Yet, the keystone of his agricultural policy was the internal colonialization of the peasantry through a state-managed, systematic exploitation that was to supply a major source of capital needed to launch Soviet industrialization. Consequently, he wholeheartedly supported Stalin's turn to forced collectivization as consistent with his own agricultural policy.

Trotsky's policies also aimed at a rapid industrialization, since he considered it the basis of socialism as well as indispensable for the mechanization of agriculture needed to extend the area sown, increase the grain surplus marketable abroad, and subsidize industrialization.[35] The initial launching of Soviet agriculture, however, was to be on the basis of privately owned farms: i.e., capitalist agriculture. Trotsky rejected an exploitation of the peasantry and, like Stalin, he initially supported a policy of gradualistic collectivization aided by state investments in agriculture.[36] In Trotsky's view, collectivization was to be preceded by industrialization which, in turn, was to be based on selling the peasant's grain abroad for gold. This assumed, of course, that the grain could be collected and made available to the government. It assumed, too, that the pace of the industrialization would therefore be adjusted to the size of the agricultural surplus that could be extracted. But how, then, could the rapid industrialization sought in certain of Trotsky's policies proceed without *intensive* exploitation of the peasantry? The rural policy was, formally, one of measured prudence for maintaining the alliance of town and country; but the logic of his position was the logic of primitive "Socialist" accumulation. Furthermore, the continued reliance on capitalist agriculture, under such conditions, would seem to be a danger to the Soviet power.[37]

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35. E.H. Carr has noted that although Preobrazhensky's strategy of industrialization by the exploitation of the peasantry was not official policy until 1928, when Stalin spoke of exacting "tribute" from the peasantry, "it was not seriously refuted." "Revolution from Above," *New Left Review*, November-December 1967, p. 20. Trotsky's early policies toward agriculture seem to have undergone a change. In 1923, he accepted agricultural capitalism and even kulak "enrichment." In 1926, in his *Towards Socialism or Capitalism*, he expressed confidence that this would not threaten the Bolshevik power. In 1929, however, his *Bulletin of the Opposition* warns of the counterrevolutionary dangers from capitalist farming. Cited in E.H. Carr, *ibid.* See also R.B. Day, *Trotsky and the Politics of Economic Isolation* (Cambridge, 1973).

36. Like Preobrazhensky, Trotsky never doubted that building socialism required "tapping" the peasantry's resources. "The peasant's grain is exchanged for foreign gold," he said. "The gold in turn is transformed into machinery...for city and countryside... The technical and socialist progress of agriculture cannot be separated from an increasing predominance of industry in the total economy of the nation." Cf. "Toward Capitalism or Socialism?" (1925) in L. Trotsky, *The Challenge of the Left Opposition 1923-25* (New York, 1975), p. 338. In short, the requirements of industry took precedence; collectivization for him was contingent on industrialization: "the industrialization and consequently the collectivization of agriculture will advance parallel with the growth of our exports." *Ibid.*, p. 359.

37. Yet Trotsky at first professed that he thought not, although later changing his position.

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Modern appraisals of Soviet collectivization contain an implicit contradiction. They stress that Bolshevik rural policy called for a gradual, voluntary collectivization of farming, thereby implying that their policy and theory must be taken into account. Yet, in characterizing the policy of forced collectivization primarily as a panicky response to threatening circumstances, they also imply the irrelevance of rational theory and policy. An argument can be made that the Party's repeated disclaimers concerning forced collectivization were always uttered with an eye to their possible political effects and were always somewhat shallow political pieties. Class warfare, like war between states, is frequently launched by those who have all along averred that they only wanted peace.

Bukharin's and Preobrazhensky's *The ABC of Communism* can, for example be interpreted as a typical Bolshevik pronouncement on the desirability of gradual, voluntary "socialization" of agriculture. There is the standard argument that the Soviet state "must be careful to avoid alienating the middle peasants by ill considered and premature measures and must make no attempt to coerce *them* into forming communes and artels." Yet, it is immediately intimated that this was then simply a strategem required by the exigencies of the Civil War: "At the present juncture the principal task of Communism in Russia is to bring it to pass that the workers upon their own initiative, and the peasants upon their own initiative, shall destroy the counter-revolution. When that has been achieved, there will no longer be an insuperable obstacle in the way of the socialization of agriculture."[38] It may be argued, of course, that this simply refers to a voluntary socialization of agriculture and need not imply that, once the Civil War ended, *forced* collectivization might begin. Nonetheless, the sentence immediately before is plainly a disclaimer of *forced* collectivization and not of socialized agriculture in general, so that if the Civil War's ending would allow a change, it would be in the policy opposing forced collectivization.

It was basic to Bolshevik rural policy to divide the peasantry into three groups, the Kulaks or richer minority of peasants, the middle majority of peasants, and the rural poor. It was expected that the Party had the task of organizing and unifying the poor peasants, lead them into struggle against the Kulaks in alliance with the middle majority peasants, ultimately pointing toward a "dictatorship of the poor peasants in rural life ...the rule of the vanguard of the rural workers, and the rule of that minority which is two centuries ahead of the majority."[39] In effect, the rural poor were to play much the same role in the countryside as the proletariat was expected to play in the cities. This was the fundamental conception of Bolshevik rural policy. It was a total failure. The peasant community remained largely solidary against the outside and the city, as it had been for centuries

The crucial political task in the countryside for Preobrazhensky and Bukharin was to isolate the Kulaks and unify the rural poor and the middle

38. N. Bukharin and E. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism, op.cit.*
39. *Ibid.*, p. 319.

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peasants who "form the great majority of the Russian peasants." Without this alliance the CPSU had no leverage in the countryside. If the poor peasants were their hope, the Kulaks were their irreconcilable foes: "As long as this class of rich peasants continues to exist, its members will inevitably prove to be irreconcilable enemies of the proletarian State." There is no reason to believe that the cadres of the CPSU ever wavered in this judgement. Under the pressures of the Civil War they tabled it but did not forget it. Having judged the Kulaks irreconcilable class enemies, and "agents of international capitalism," Preobrazhensky and Bukharin warned them that they "can expect nothing from the Soviet Power but a pitiless struggle against its counter-revolutionary activities."[40] But this struggle premissed the alliance between the middle and poor peasantry "under the leadership of the proletariat, and only through the frank acceptance of this leadership." But the dilemma was this: "the petty bourgeois mentality of the middle peasants inclines them to an alliance with the rich peasantry" rather than with the poor against the rich—and all the more so as they were forced to give grain to the town without receiving industrial goods in exchange .

Party policy calling for gradual and voluntary collectivization was thus *never* meant for the Kulaks, but, at best for the middle and poor peasants. It was from the beginning understood that the rich peasants could be coerced, forcibly expropriated and even forcibly collectivized. (Indeed, Stalin's forced collectivization, too, was in principle directed only against the "Kulaks.") If Bolshevik policy allowed this to be done to the kulaks, and if the middle majority of peasants were defined as having a petty-bourgeois mentality, and came under the hegemony of these "agents of international capitalism," then would not the same policy of forcible collectivization and "pitiless struggle" be applicable to middle peasants as well? And all the more so as poor peasants were seen as coming under the hegemony of the middle peasantry. Still worse, if the experience of a solidary peasant resistance and grain strike confirmed these theoretical nightmares, then was not Stalin's policy of the forced collectivization a product, at least in part, of Bolshevik rural policy? Was it not more than a "panic" in the face of crisis? Did it not have a certain grounding in Bolshevik theory?

With the ebb of revolution in Central Europe, Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" seemed increasingly irrelevant as a guide to Soviet industrialization, relying on help from the working class in more advanced countries who had by now accommodated to their own societies. If the perspective of the permanent revolution implied, as Trotsky held, that "only the victory of the proletariat in the West could protect Russia from bourgeois restoration and assure it the possibility of rounding out socialism,"[41] the Russian achievement might seem diminished and Soviet survival would now appear to be caught between a passive dependence on others or on an active revolutionary expansionism. The logic of the argument is as follows: not

40. *Ibid.*, p. 317.
41. Irving Howe, ed., *The Basic Writings of Trotsky* (New York, 1976), p. 140.

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expecting socialism to survive in international isolation, especially a "socialism" that had seized power in backward Russia, a successful revolution in only one or a few countries would have to rely on aid from others; but it could not be expected passively to wait for these other revolutions to succeed in their own good time, especially as the forces of international capitalism would surely attempt to put them down. Therefore, a victorious proletariat in one country would have to take vigorous military initiatives in aid of neighboring proletariats. In short, permanent revolution evolves into "revolution from without."[42] But as these other revolutions were now blocked, the danger of a regression to Oblomovism, i.e., old Russian dreamy passivity, seemed intensified by policies stemming from the theory of permanent revolution. "Socialism in one country," a policy first formulated by Bukharin and then co-opted by Stalin,[43] had its appeal because it seemed to reject passivity within the framework of a seeming realism. With a driving voluntarism, he argued that outcomes depended decisively on what was done by the Party and Soviet people. Socialism in one country thus reasserted the potency and initiative of the party membership. The political dimension of this rejection of passivity hinged on the importance attributed to the alliance with the peasantry. The Stalinists accused Trotsky of relying more on foreign help, from the successful revolutions elsewhere, and less on maintaining the alliance with the peasantry. In the end, which came with Trotsky's expulsion in 1927, the exhausted Party masses seeking an end to "upheavals" voted overwhelmingly against Trotsky's "permanent revolution" and for Stalin and Bukharin's "socialism in one country:"

The central issue in the debate between the two policies was how much the Soviet state should rely on international help, and how much on internal resources that it could control itself. The question was whether the Soviet Union could by itself reconstruct its economy and protect itself against the foreign restoration of capitalism, or whether it needed to rely also on substantial help from successful revolutions elsewhere, thus needed to support them, and risk being embroiled in foreign conflicts.[44] Thus, socialism in one

42. In 1921 Trotsky reiterated this, insisting that "in principle, the Soviet Government would always be for an offensive revolutionary war under conditions when such a war could lead to the liberation of the toiling classes in other countries." Cited in "Introduction to Tukachevsky," *op.cit.*, p. 82. In a similar vein, Tukachevsky had also argued for revolution from without, carried in Napoleonic fashion by the Red Army to its class brothers. He painstakingly reiterated that "revolution from within and revolution from without are of absolutely equal value," warning, however, that if the class instinct of a proletariat had been dulled by "petty-bourgeois nationalism" they were susceptible to the bourgeoisie's plea for chauvinistic self-defense. In other words: to defend their country. Tukachevsky thus adopted a very aggressive posture, accenting a military extension of the revolution. In this, he was a Clausewitzian, holding that revolutionary war was an extension of revolutionary politics by other means. Revolutionary war was to be pursued "*even if the neighboring working class is not always prepared to receive a socialist invasion from without.*" *Ibid.*, p. 96, italics added. Tukachevsky conceived of the leaders of the Communist International as the general staff of the world revolution, who, along with their political duties, would "direct the world revolutionary movement, of which socialist war was a part." *Ibid.*, p. 97.

43. See Stephen Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution, op.cit.*, pp. 147-148, 186-188. Cf. E.H. Carr, *Socialism in One Country, 1924-1926*, vol. 2 (Middlesex, 1970), p. 52.

44. Cf. Naomi Allen's introduction to Leon Trotsky, *The Challenge of the Left Opposition,*

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country represented an isolationist turn, aiming to reduce provocation for an external invasion of the USSR. It was a turn that was, simultaneously, away from internationalism and toward greater national self-reliance. Socialism in one country was a resolute turning away from any expectation that help might yet come from outside at any moment; it was the renunciation of miracles, chiliasm and magic so often associated with the commitment to methodical work. Stalin used Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution as the whipping boy to cut the last lingering expectation that help might come from abroad and to signal that, from then on, the new state had to rely exclusively on its own labors. It was domestic labor rather than international politics that was to save the state. Socialism in one country, then, meant a kind of Protestantized depoliticization.

No leading Bolshevik, including Stalin, seems to have thought that a mature, "rounded" socialism could be built by or within one country alone. The fundamental issue was the power and security of the Soviet state, not the final victory of socialism. What divided them, then, was not the conditions thought necessary for human emancipation but the requisites of Soviet power, then and there. Trotsky did not believe that the Soviet state could be secure against capitalist restoration unless the Soviet revolution spread to industrialized Europe.[45] The Stalinists, however, thought they could hold off or prevent foreign intervention with the resources at their disposal. They wanted to launch the construction of such socialism as they could then begin, under the umbrella of the Soviet power. Stalinism and socialism in one country, then, came down to the priority of defending the USSR, which Trotsky's "foreign entanglement" seemed to threaten. For Stalinism, state power was decisive. In time it became an end in itself and lost its role as a *means* to socialist emancipation. The emancipatory goals of socialism receded into the vague

1923-1925, op.cit., p. 42: "Stalin's theory of socialism in one country, which was first promulgated in December 10, 1924, was an attempt to free Soviet foreign policy from the program of international proletarian revolution. It asserted that the alliance of workers and peasants was, in and of itself, a sufficient guarantee against the danger of capitalist restoration within the borders of the USSR. This was an instinctive turning away from foreign revolutionary entanglements which had proved disappointing...It was only after Lenin's death that any open challenge to internationalism could be made. Stalin launched it in 1924, under the guise of an attack on Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution." But it could, of course, be argued that ever since Brest-Litovsk, that policy had been on the wane in the Soviet Union, being slowly and uneasily interred by Lenin and Trotsky themselves, no less than Stalin. For a documentation of such an argument about the continual erosion of internationalism, see George Spiro, *Marxism and the Bolshevik State* (New York, 1951).

45. There is no doubt that Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution implies a policy of lending support to revolutions elsewhere. As Trotsky remarked, permanent revolution means "that the revolution does not come to an end after this or that political conquest...we continually and constantly advance it... This applies to the conquests of the revolution inside of a country *as well as to its extension over the international arena.*" In *The Challenge of the Left Opposition, op.cit.*, p. 102; from "The New Course," December, 1923. Italics added. In 1923, Trotsky reaffirmed this practical import of permanent revolution by calling for support for the German revolution. But at the same time, there is little reason to believe—as Stalin insisted—that such a policy was anathema to classical Leninism. "Like Trotsky and like all other leading Bolsheviks, Lenin had said again and again that the *final* victory of socialism could not be achieved in one country—least of all in a country that was economically backward." Cf. E.H. Carr, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, p. 49.

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future; energies were now invested in anything that extended and protected the power of the Soviet state, where power was defined in the lexicon of "scientific socialism" as the development of industrial, technological and military resources.

After 1921, Lenin had become increasingly committed to NEP and had "implied that socialism in an isolated Soviet Russia was possible."[46] Indeed, on November 20, 1922, in what was apparently his final speech in public, Lenin actually contended that "Socialism is no longer a question of the distant future...not tomorrow, but in a few years,...NEP Russia will become socialist Russia."[47] Lenin, Bukharin as well as Stalin had thus all been converging on a policy whose common dimension was socialism in one country. In that sense, Stalin was correct in holding that socialism in one country was "Leninist." And from this convergence, Trotsky might be seen as odd man out, as the deviant against whom the others should and did unite. Stalin's socialism in one country, however, was fundamentally different since it rigorously excluded Lenin's gradualism; instead, Stalin fused socialism in one country with the authoritarian voluntarism that was the Bolshevik's political paradigm in the Civil War period.

A central difference between Trotsky's permanent revolution and Stalin's socialism in one country was that Stalin eliminated from his policy any reliance on revolution from without, stressed legal correctness in foreign relations, and, blocking the Soviet state's external military initiatives, he refocused them on *internal* targets: the Kulaks, the peasantry, and Trotskyism itself. The defeat of Trotsky's permanent revolution thus meant the repression of revolution-from-without within Bolshevism; an increasing effort to normalize the Bolshevik state's relationship to other states; and the corresponding ability to intensify class warfare within the Soviet Union. Socialism in one country and forced collectivization are thus linked by their common connection with "revolution from without." The core of Bolshevik rural strategy had been to establish an alliance between the rural poor and the middle majority of peasants against the kulaks. This had collapsed, however, because the middle peasants accepted the hegemony of the richer, and the poor accepted that of the middle peasantry. How, then, might the Bolsheviks proceed in the countryside if they lacked an *internal* agent? In effect, the policy of forced collectivization was one of "revolution from without," which is nearly what Stalin himself said in characterizing his policy as "revolution from above."

Stalin's forced collectivization was thus Trotskyism applied within the framework of internal colonialism. Stalin had not so much renounced

46. Cohen, *Bukharin, op.cit.*, p. 138. Already in 1915, Lenin maintained that "socialism is possible in the first instance in a few capitalistic countries or even in one single country." Cited in Carr, vol. 2, *op.cit.*, p. 50. Lenin added immediately that a victorious proletariat would take the initiative in creating revolution from without, i.e., it "would stand up against the capitalist rest of the world, attracting to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, causing revolts among them against the capitalists, acting in case of necessity even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their state."

47. Cited in Cohen, *op.cit.*, p. 136.

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permanent revolution and its associated policy of revolution from without as he had redirected and displaced it against an internal target by substituting internal colonialism for external revolutionary imperialism, domestic violence for foreign violence. Stalinism and Trotskyism thus constitute a "unity of opposites": they are the Yin and Yang of Bolshevism. Both are united at the level of their deep structure in the Leninist voluntarism which premised that socialism and socialist consciousness have to be brought to groups from the outside by a theoretically prescient elite, as Lenin explicitly argued in *What Is to Be Done?*

Revolution from without and revolution from above, then, are alternative Bolshevik policies, the latter growing with the repression of the former. What happens, however, when revolution from above is completed? With the end of Stalinism and the completion of collectivization (or with the "solution" to the agricultural problem), there is a possibility of *increased* external aggression. Krushchev's missile intervention in Cuba and the Soviet invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, as well as the Soviet Union's coordination of the Cuban presence in Angola and elsewhere in Africa, all signify the real end of Stalinism as the repression of revolution from without.[48]

All of this addresses the forced collectivization of 1929, but not the precipitating events that dislodged the CPSU from its seemingly settled policy of gradual, suasive collectivization. The hinge here revolves around events beginning in 1925 and culminating in 1928. The 15th Party Congress of 1927 expelled the Trotskyist opposition and created a strange political situation.[49] Although it clarified who would be responsible for future failures, the defeat of the opposition also meant that Stalin's faction could no longer be effectively held to account. Economic events are, however, considerably less ambiguous: even though there were very good crops between 1925 and 1927, grain collections declined in 1927 and 1928, with those of 1927 being only half as large as the year before. This threatened urban provisioning and sent Party leaders on the road—Stalin for the last time of his regime—resorting to desperate measures which E.H. Carr describes as the result of a "panic." Using forced loans, prosecutions, quotas and requisitions, they succeeded in appropriating the "surplus." Indeed, they garnered almost as much grain as had been collected in 1926-27. But as Carr notes: "The costs were heavy. The peasants had been stripped... Few managed to keep more than was barely necessary... Some went hungry, or had to kill animals. The operation was a

48. After all, detente was plainly only one of several tracks pursued by the USSR and was accompanied by an apparently inconsistent expansionism. From what has been argued, detente is a straight development of the rejection of revolution from without—a natural and unsurprising evolution. What needed explanation was why detente was accompanied by intensified Soviet expansionism.

49. Whereupon Stalin addressed the Congress as follows: "I believe that until recently there were conditions that confronted the Party with the necessity of having me in this post, as a more or less brusque sort of man, to serve as a kind of antidote to the opposition. But...now the opposition has not only been defeated but expelled from the Party as well. And all the while we have had Lenin's instructions, which in my opinion must be put into effect. Therefore, I ask the plenum to relieve me of the post of General Secretary. I assure you, comrades, that the Party stands only to gain from this." Cited by Medvedev in Tucker, *op.cit.*, p. 207.

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declaration of war against the *kulak* who would henceforth fight the authorities by any means in his power... On the other side, the authorities drew the short-sighted conclusion that strong-arm methods paid. This episode, more than any other single episode, set in motion the process which ended in collectivization."[50]

After these events, of course, the Party met only the most bitter resistance of a solidary peasant community. Yet, to understand this as precipitating a "panic" among Party leaders is another matter. Who and what was panicking them? Opposition ranks were broken; there was no political party alternative to the CPSU to which disaffected peasants and disappointed workers might turn.[51] The Party's response is better described as unhesitating ruthlessness consistent with its "seige mentality." There are two decisive questions about such ruthlessness, one bearing on motives, the other on opportunity.

In regard to the motives behind it, the ruthlessness was partly a product of a growing commitment to *rapid* industrialization and thus to the means believed necessary for it, including rapid capital accumulation; and the threat of hunger to the Party's urban base among industrial workers. This seige mentality encouraged an increasing uneasiness about the Soviet state's international isolation and a growing determination to tolerate no longer the peasantry's unpredictability and infuriating resistance.[52] The decision to be ruthless was legitimated by a seige mentality but was made possible by the system of internal colonialism within which the most extreme sanctions could be inflicted upon the peasantry with impunity—an impunity that made it unnecessary for the Party leaders to have "panicked." It was the sociology of internal colonialism rather than the psychology of panic that shaped the Party's brutal response to peasant resistance.

The fundamental structural condition for open Party war against the peasantry was the pulverization of society so that there were no group structures or mass media that could be used against the state apparatus.[53]

50. E.H. Carr, "Revolution from Above," *New Left Review*, November-December 1967, p. 23. Carr's remarks here indicate just how flabby the entire concept of a "surplus" is. The concept of an economic surplus is objectivistic. It premisses that the surplus is "out there," already in-being, waiting to be appropriated. But the surplus is a *produced* entity and is produced not only by prior production, but by the very act of appropriation. The size of a "surplus" depends on the ruthlessness of the appropriators and the resistance of the expropriated.

51. As Tucker notes, "Even allowing that the regime was faced in 1927-28 with something like a peasant 'grain strike'...there is no serious evidence of incipient political rebelliousness in the countryside at that time...and the war scare was in fact grossly and crudely manipulated by Soviet politicians in 1927." Cf. Tucker, *op.cit.*, pp. 87-88. The quotation by Tucker is from John Sontag. See also Moishe Lewin, "The Immediate Background of Soviet Collectivization," *Soviet Studies*, October 1965.

52. Fantasies of bloody violence against the kulaks may be found even in the language of the temperate Bukharin, who, at the Central Committee meeting of July 1928, spoke of the Party as "machine-gunning" them if necessary.

53. To the destruction of traditional social and political groups we need to add the continuing disruption of the CPSU itself through a series of purges and expulsions: in 1921 against "criminal" elements who had supposedly used the Civil War to infiltrate the Party; in 1924, against critical intellectuals and youth sympathetic to Trotsky; and in 1925 against Trotskyists and other left oppositionists within village units. The Left opposition was expelled in 1927 and Bukharin's followers were purged in 1929. In short, resistance to the state became increasingly difficult inside the Party as well as outside of it.

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The resistance of atomized and fragmented individuals lacks conviction and effectiveness. The possibility of effective resistance against any state depends in considerable part on the existence of intact social groups possessing a measure of autonomy and with communication access to other groups. The final and decisive crippling of the capacity to resist the growing Soviet state was, therefore, the total elimination of an opposition press, and of all journals, newspapers or other media that were not government sanctioned.[54]

It is within the framework of internal colonialism that the meaning of the Party's policy of gradual, peaceful, persuasive collectivization revealed its basically instrumental character. Internal colonialism meant that the peasants were the raw material of socialism, not the object of its emancipation.

In December of 1929, Stalin decreed the "liquidation of the kulaks as a class." The Soviet Union's 125 million peasants began to be forced off their land onto collective farms. It is sometimes said that the effect of this property transfer was to transform the peasants into "proletarians," but this is not historically exact. The peasants were more nearly transformed into land-bound serfs than proletarians; they were even denied the passports now required (1932) of city dwellers for internal travel and, moreover, also had to work an obligatory minimum number of days. Collectivization meant the creation of huge plantations whose advantage was not greater efficiency but a more effective system of centralized control over the peasantry than would have been possible had they remained on their 25 million individual farms. Collectivization meant that the state now had direct access to the agricultural "surplus" and could guarantee the provisioning of cities while sustaining the drive to industrialize by selling this "surplus" on the world market to pay for new capital goods. The prized goal was industrialization as required by "socialism in one country"; by a "scientific socialism" that exalted development of the forces of production; by the need to mechanize the rapid collectivization under way; and in order to strengthen the isolated new state against international threat. This also explains why the Party sought to control the industrialized working class. The 1930 Party Congress thus authorized the "Central Control Commission" to supervise and force-feed industrial growth. This meant placing industry under the direction of a Party organ with quasi-police functions, i.e., commissioned to eliminate political dissidence and incompetence, hence able to define industrial failures as politically suspect.

Having appointed itself as the demiurge of industrialization, the Party became subject to a new criterion of legitimation: successful industrialization. Thus, as Stalinism became entrenched, industrialization became the economistic substitute for emancipation. As industrialization empha-

54. Medvedev lists and dates the closing of these magazines and journals, concluding that, by the year of the forced collectivization, 1929, "there was not a single non-Party publication left, nor any privately owned publishing houses that might serve as vehicles for oppositionist views." In Tucker, *op.cit.*, p. 205; for the larger significance of mass media in relation to the politics of resistance today, see my *The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology* (New York, 1976), especially Chapter 6, "Toward a Media-Critical Politics."

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sized the development of heavy industry rather than consumers' goods, even the living standards of industrial workers were undermined and exposed to increasing coercion.[55] Yet, bad as things were in the cities, it was in the countryside and its collective plantations[56] that the greatest suffering was experienced. As Dallin and Breslauer report, "between six and 10 million kulaks and others ascribed to this ill-defined group were liquidated as a class; in most cases they were deported or shot by urban-based cadres who were brought into rural areas."[57] Over the years, vast penal camps were set up in the Soviet Union's desert and arctic areas (the Gulag Archipelago) to which a continuing stream of kulaks and other resistant peasantry were sent. According to Sakharov, "At least 10 to 15 million people perished... by torture or execution in camps for exiled kulaks..."[58]

At the village level, Stalin's decree meant armed invaders encircling villages and bursting into the homes of middle (and often poor) peasant families.[59] The armed men would loudly herd people off, often stripping them of their clothing. If hot kasha was on the stoves, it might be eaten on the spot; if vodka was found, it was drunk on the spot. Mufflers and hats were stripped from children's heads; eyeglasses snatched from their wearers' faces. Some poor peasants and activists seized the occasion for personal enrichment by blackmailing kulaks, promising to remove them from deportation lists. The kulaks were beside themselves in panic; some entered into fictitious divorces, hoping this might protect their property; waves of suicide swept their group, some despairingly killed their wives, children, and themselves. Rather than surrender their livestock to the collectives, many of the peasants chose to kill them and eat as much meat as they could, often gorging themselves sick.[60]

55. Trade unions were smashed during 1929-1930 after Tomsky's removal as their head. Workers were increasingly enserfed to the factory managers from whom they had to secure permission if they wished to leave or change jobs. Plant management was also given control over food supplies and other necessities by a decree of the Party's Central Committee in 1932. Workers were also threatened with imprisonment if they failed to meet quotas. The smashed unions could only remain silent.

56. "The plantation or estate wage laborer is typically cut off from other occupational groups and completely dependent on his fellow workers. Unlike the peasant or commercial farmer, the agricultural wage laborer is typically part of a work gang... As Erving Goffman has pointed out, the plantation or landed estate is similar to a prison or other total institution... The plantation is an enterprise owned either by a commercial corporation or government body or by an individual, if the enterprise includes power-driven processing machinery, and worked by wage laborers resident for continuous terms of more than one year." Jeffrey M. Paige, *Agrarian Revolutions* (New York, 1975), pp. 37, 79.

57. Alexander Dallin and George W. Breslauer, *Political Terror in Communist Systems* (Stanford, 1970), p. 63.

58. Cited in Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties* (New York, 1973), p. 713. See also Roger Garaudy, *Le Grand Tournant du Socialisme* (Paris, 1969), where he accepted these figures while he was still on the French Communist Party's Politburo.

59. The following account is from Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (Cambridge, 1954).

60. Between 1928 and 1934, there was a vast butchery of the country's livestock: the number of horses declined from 32 million to 15 million; cattle declined from 60 million to 34 million. By 1929, urban workers were eating substantially less meat, sugar and bread; by 1932, a countrywide famine was in full swing. In 1932, urban workers were eating one-third as much meat as they did in 1928 while people in rural areas were then eating slightly more than one-third of the 1928 meat consumption.

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The ensuing 1932 famine alone is estimated to have killed about five million persons, some from outright starvation, others from physical deterioration and diseases linked to hunger and malnutrition.[61] Almost a quarter of the Ukrainian CP was expelled and "liquidated" in 1933. It was during the 1932 famine that plant managers were given control over workers' rations.[62]

Collectivization also meant a drastic increase in the number of secret police; notwithstanding early party expectations of peaceful and voluntary collectivization, when the time came, the collectivizers arrived with guns in their hands.[63] Furthermore, in order to expedite the liquidation of the kulaks it was necessary to make lists of the village families to be deported, of the adults and children in each of the families and, above all, lists of property and livestock. It was also necessary to arrange the logistics of deportation by train or other means of transportation. The infrastructure of rational terror consists of committee meetings, of clerical computations, bookkeeping inventories, personnel and budgetary appropriations. The collectivizers came with guns in one hand, and pencil and paper in the other. In short, collectivization meant an immediate massive expansion of the secret police and of the entire state bureaucracy. The infrastructure of Stalinism was being built. By 1929, the one million public officials of pre-revolutionary times had grown to 4.6 million. Four years after the collectivization, however, they had almost doubled.

Stalinism also entailed the political outflanking of the CPSU itself on two fronts: on one, from the direction of a burgeoning state bureaucracy whose loyalty to top authority did not result from discussion or political persuasion, and, on the second front, by the development of a direct link with the urban populace, bypassing the Party itself (and the bureaucracy). Both the bureaucracy and the urban following gave Stalin an independent base that allowed him to move against the Party in ways reminiscent of Mao's use of the Red

61. According to Ciliga, "In the villages of the Ukraine, the North Caucasus and Central Asia cannibalism was, if not extensive, at least a widespread phenomenon." Cf. A. Ciliga, cited in Kostiuk, *op.cit.*, p. 15.

62. Closely connected with the collectivization drive, and partly in preparation for it, there was also an extensive anti-religion campaign. As Medvedev put it: "In the fall of 1928 this campaign began to assume the character of a wave of terror against the church...Religion was apparently regarded as one of the chief brakes upon collectivization... Thus, during collectivization, hundreds of thousands suffered not because of social criteria but because of their religious beliefs... Eighty percent of all Russian villages' churches were closed in 1930..." In Tucker, *op.cit.*, pp. 208-210. What was happening was that the war against the peasants was the hub which connected numerous other tensions in Soviet society.

63. There was good reason for these arms, for the peasants, often including robust sons with experience in the Red Army, did not simply resist passively but often engaged in determined armed struggle. Kostiuk gives a detailed account of armed peasant resistance to collectivization: "Often it was only the NKVD troops and the regular army who saved the regime from being overthrown by mass rebellions of the hungry, tortured, and ferocious peasants, determined to drive the government from the countryside... The most usual reprisal against the most active participants in the resistance was execution on the spot; less active participants were given long sentences in concentration camps, while the rest of the population, women and children, the aged and the sick, hundreds of thousands, were deported to distant, unpopulated places in the North of the USSR and there the majority of them perished." Cf. Hryhory Kostiuk, *Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine, A Study of the Decade of Mass Terror (1929-1939)* (New York, 1961), p. 10.

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Guard during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. This independent base made possible the transformation of party leadership into a *personal dictatorship*.

The Internal Threat to Stalinism: Political Repercussions

The resulting mass discontent in the country began to work its way up through the Communist Party. In his talks with Boris Nikolaevskii in Paris during the spring of 1936, Bukharin described the internal Party situation as follows: "In 1932...half the country was stricken with famine. The workers were on short rations. The productivity of labor had greatly fallen...The predominant view in Party circles was that Stalin had led the country into an impasse by his policy, that he had roused the peasants against the Party, and that the situation could be saved only by his removal from Party domination. Many influential members of the Central Committee were of this opinion. It was said that an anti-Stalin majority was being formed in the Politburo as well. Wherever Party officials met, the subject of the discussion was: what program was to be substituted for Stalin's 'general line'." [64]

Opposition also grew at the grass roots level,[65] and there were increasing indications that even Stalin's closest following was deserting him: the political assets with which he had entered the forced collectivization were now spent. There is also the emergence of a moderate opposition bloc led by Sergei Kirov, the extremely popular secretary of the Leningrad Party, who opposed Stalin in connection with the 1932 "Riutin affair."[66] At that time, Kirov leaned toward a policy of reconciliation both within the Party as well as between the Party and society, urging the relaxation of the terror that had accompanied the collectivization. After the Nazis took power in Germany in 1933, such a policy was seen as a way of unifying the Soviet Union to meet the growing threat of German invasion. Reconciliation was one of the themes of the 17th Party Congress in 1934: leaders of the defeated right opposition were allowed to attend, and Kamenev, Bukharin, Radek and others were even allowed to speak and were, in some cases, applauded by the delegates. At the 17th Congress, Kirov was given a particularly lively reception and was not only elected a Politburo member but also a secretary of the Party. At this point, Kirov had become the most visible and popular alternative to Stalin's

64. Originally published by Nikolaevskii in 1936 as his record of Bukharin's remarks in the Menshevik *Socialist Messenger* and as *Letter of an Old Bolshevik* (London, 1938); see also Robert V. Daniels, ed., *Foundations of Soviet Totalitarianism* (Lexington, Mass., 1972), p. 139.

65. For example, foreign Communists who had come to work in the USSR but had become disillusioned were quickly brought into contact with the organized opposition on the local levels. Cf. Andrew Smith, *I was a Communist Worker* (London, 1937). The Yugoslav Communist, A. Ciliga, also confirms this in his book *Au Pays du Grand Mensogne* (Paris, 1938).

66. Riutin, an Old Bolshevik, had published an alternative program to the Party's "general line" containing an exceptionally pointed attack on Stalin's obsession with power as well as the phenomenon that Krushchev later described as the "cult of personality." Riutin called for Stalin's removal from the general secretariat—his power base. After having admitted writing the new program, Riutin was brought to trial before the Politburo, where the secret police, believed to be acting on Stalin's initiative, asked for the death penalty. At that time, this was a remarkable demand since Bolsheviks had been hitherto protected from the death penalty by "Lenin's legacy" —a policy opposing bloodshed within the Party. Under Kirov's influence, the majority of the Politburo defeated the recommendation for the death penalty.

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leadership, to whom any Stalinist opposition would naturally gravitate.[67]

Shortly thereafter, on December 1, 1934, Kirov was murdered in Leningrad under what Krushchev in his 1956 speech called mysterious circumstances.[68] On the very night of the assassination, Stalin rapidly

67. Indeed, "post-Stalin recollections indicate that the leader [Stalin] had cause for concern with the possible rivalry of S.M. Kirov. A surviving delegate to the Congress (a rarity), L. Shaumian, wrote in 1964 that Kirov was in 1934 'the favourite of the whole party' and that 'the thought sprang up among some delegates,' especially older members, that 'the time had come to shift Stalin from the post of General Secretary to other work'." Cf. Robert H. MacNeal, ed., *Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU, Vol. 3: The Stalin Years, 1929-1953* (Toronto, 1974), p. 130.

68. "It must be asserted that to this day the circumstances surrounding Kirov's murder hide many things which are inexplicable and mysterious," declared Krushchev. "There are reasons for the suspicion that the killer of Kirov, Nikolayev, was assisted by someone from among the people whose duty it was to protect the person of Kirov. A month and a half before the killing, Nikolayev was arrested on the grounds of suspicious behavior, but he was released and not even searched. It is an unusually suspicious circumstance that when the Chekist assigned to protect Kirov was being brought for an interrogation, on December 2, 1934, he was killed in a car 'accident' in which no other occupants of the car were harmed. After the murder of Kirov, top functionaries of the Leningrad NKVD were given very light sentences, but in 1937 they were shot. We can assume they were shot in order to cover the traces of the organizers of Kirov's killing." Cf. *Anatomy of Terror, Special Report to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Closed Session, Feb. 24-25, 1956, by Nikita S. Krushchev, First Secretary, CPSU (Washington, 1960), p. 33. There is also an edition edited by Boris I. Nicolaevsky (New York, 1962) with a useful introduction and annotations by the editor. There are also editions edited by Bertram Wolfe (New York, 1957), and one translated by Tamara Deutscher, with an introduction by Zhores A. and Roy A. Medvedev, containing additional documents, and the resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU, June 30, 1976, on the Twentieth Congress, in which Stalinism is defined as a "stage the Soviet Union has passed through in its development..." (p. 115), published for the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (Nottingham, 1976). The United States State Department first released on June 4, 1956, a text of the speech that it characterized as having "been prepared for the guidance of the Party leadership of a Communist Party outside of the USSR;" foreign Communists had not been allowed to attend the original speech. While the State Department formally denied that it vouched for the text's authenticity, the fact that it released it suggested that it considered it substantially correct. Confirmation of this is implicit in the Central Committee resolution cited above, published in *Pravda* July 2, 1956, and in a *Pravda* editorial of March 28, 1956. Zhores and Roy Medvedev have stated that Krushchev's speech "was very far from containing all the grave truths about Stalin's offences; supplementary information given five years later, at the Twenty-second Congress in 1961, startled and shocked the listeners anew." *Ibid.* p. 11. They also provide a detailed account of how Krushchev had to maneuver in the Central Committee so that they might not quash his talk, how it was presented at a midnight session that had not been announced in advance, and how, subsequently, the talk was printed, dispatched first to regional Party Committees and activitists, then to district committees and only finally to all registered Party members, then sent to parties abroad, from one of which the U.S. State Department must have secured its text. When news of the speech first reached the press, it was denied by various Communist organs. Characteristically, the Dutch Communist Party (*De Waarheid*, June 7, 1956) accused the State Department of a falsification that sought to sow mistrust; while acknowledging that "serious errors were now being corrected," it also insisted that Krushchev's speech "contained nothing new of significance." Subsequently, however, the world Communist press and parties accepted the essential allegations of the speech, and the American CP criticized it as not having gone far enough. On June 12, the *Daily Worker* published an article by a Stalin Prize winner, Howard Fast, characterizing the speech as "a strange and awful document... one must face the fact that it itemizes a record of barbarism and paranoic blood lost that will be a lasting and shameful memory to civilized man." On June 18, Eugene Dennis, the American Party's general secretary, acknowledged that "the Krushchev report on Stalin tells a tragic story. Shocking and painful as it is, however, it is a part of history." Subsequently, Dennis took the view that Stalinism was part of the "terrible price" that world imperialism had exacted from the Soviet people, a position that Louis Althusser seems to have followed. For an excellent set of documents, concerning these and other reactions by other Communist parties, see the

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processed a decree that called for speeding activity against terrorists; forbade delaying their executions; and demanded the immediate enforcement of any death sentence that was issued. "This directive," says Krushchev, "became the basis for mass acts of abuse against socialist legality." The point, however, is not so much that Stalin had deftly seized the occasion of Kirov's death to destroy the opposition and tighten his control of the Party, but rather, that he had created that very occasion.[69] It was not simply that the degree sprang to hand. Rather, it and a great deal more had even earlier been placed in readiness to administer the terror that soon followed Kirov's murder.[70] Well before Nikolayev's murder of Kirov,[71] the pieces were being moved into position for the great purges of the 1930s.

In 1935, 1936 and 1938, the three major showcase trials were held. In 1935, Kamenev and Zinoviev, the so-called "right" oppositionists, were charged with plotting against Stalin. In 1936, the so-called United Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terror Center was charged with the killing of Kirov, presumably on Trotsky's orders. In May 1938, the Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites (including Bukharin and Yagoda) was brought to trial, charged once again with the killing of Kirov and, in addition, of Maxim Gorki, as well as with espionage against the state and for plotting to dismember the Soviet Union and overthrow its socialist order. Three central themes dominate the trials: one links the accused to the murder of Kirov, thus accounting for the murder to silence the widespread rumors within the Party that implicated Stalin. A second was the Satanization of Trotsky as the demon at the center of conspiracy. A third was the linking of many of the accused to foreign espionage and treachery, so that their crime was seen as not only against the

Columbia University's Russian Institute, *The Anti-Stalin Campaign and International Communism* (New York, 1956).

69. Djilas writes that: "Recently it was made public in Moscow that he [Stalin] had probably killed the Leningrad Secretary Kirov in order to gain a pretext for settling accounts with the intra-Party opposition." Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (New York, 1962).

70. Thus, six months before the murder, the old OGPU had been abolished and replaced with a streamlined, all-union secret police, the new NKVD, with Yagoda in charge of it; in January 1933, there had been an announcement of a Party purge and in April, a central purge commission, including Yezhov, had been formed to implement it; a new Special Sector of the Central Committee—in effect, Stalin's private secretariat—was then also created, along with a special state security committee; and in June 1933, a Prosecutor-Generalship for the entire Soviet Union was newly established, which was directed by, among others, Andrei Vyshinsky, who was to be the prosecutor in the showcase purge trials that began in 1935.

71. That Stalin was most likely implicated in Kirov's murder does not mean that we do not have to account for Nikolayev's own motivation, which Krushchev does not clarify. No one now seems to believe that Nikolayev was a police agent who assassinated Kirov under orders or that he was politically motivated. One recurrent story coming out of the labor camps and elsewhere was that Nikolayev's wife was having an affair with Kirov. The puritanism of the older generation of Party leaders would dispose them to repress this aspect of the story. Thus Krasnikov's biography of Kirov, published in Moscow in 1964, accents the cozy domesticity and mutual affection ("All right, you shall have dumplings tonight") allegedly existing between Kirov and his wife, Mary. See the materials compiled by Borys Levytsky, *The Stalinist Terror in the Thirties* (Stanford, 1974), p. 38. But surely Kostiuk is mistaken in assuming that these two accounts must be incompatible. An integrated scenario would see Stalin and the secret police exploiting Nikolayev's jealousy, bending it to their own purposes, and allowing him access to Kirov, thus uniting both motive and opportunity. For a dissenting account, see Kostiuk, *Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine, op.cit.*, pp. 149-151.

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state and Party but against the nation itself and could thereby mobilize sympathies from traditionalists, patriots and church fathers.

While the trials of the former opposition leaders attracted most of the world's attention during the 1930s, they were only the symptoms of the real mass terror that had been launched simultaneously against the entire populace and the leading Soviet institutions—the Communist Party itself, the Red Army and several other large ethnic minorities. It was they who were the terror's main targets, rather than a few former leaders of the old opposition who had long been personally broken and politically isolated. To be sure, the main targets included Stalin's old political enemies, but these were no longer a rag-tag remnant of old Bolshevik leaders. The prey was the party masses themselves, who had been gravitating toward the moderate bloc around Kirov—the drift of whose aspirations had been revealed at the 17th Party Congress.[72] It was this ill-fated 17th Congress that elected the Central Committee whose plenum of February 23-March 5, 1937, challenged the purges. According to MacNeal: "there was a challenge to Stalin from a group of undetermined size probably led by a candidate member of the Politburo, Pavel P. Postyshev. While not calling for the replacement of Stalin, Postyshev expressed disbelief concerning the charges of treason that were being leveled at many senior party members..."[73] Thus, from 1934 to 1937, right into the very jaws of the purges, there was inner Party opposition to Stalin by the Stalinists themselves.[74]

This Stalinist opposition was clearly born in the effort to protect themselves from the terror and secret police. Increasingly, the secret police had become Stalin's mainstay and personal instrument and a power base exerting domination over the Party itself, reducing its autonomy as political instrument.[75]

In short: the stronger the secret police became and the more they were

72. Levytsky has noted that the "Soviet reference books admitted after Stalin's death that disenchanted Stalinists attempted at that time to remove Stalin from his position as General Secretary of the Party and to replace him with Kirov." Levytsky also cites Giuseppe Boffo's *Dopo Krusciov*, which reports that rumors in 1956 were rife in Moscow that at the 17th Congress, "in the secret balloting Stalin's name was crossed out more often than any other person's... Some even claim that he was never elected and that he barely made it only because the number of Central Committee members was increased at the last moment." Levytsky, *op.cit.*, p. 19.

73. MacNeal, *op.cit.*, p. 10. Kostiuk cites A. Avtorkhanov, who writes that the Central Committee actually defeated a Politburo resolution calling for action against Bukharin and Rykov, and that opposition to Stalin was so widespread that there was a purge of all Party secretaries and heads of republics in the fall of 1937. Cf. Kostiuk, *op.cit.*, p. 118.

74. It was the most thoroughgoing Stalinists—Kirov, his close friend, Ordzhonikidze (who committed suicide), and Postyshev—who also became alienated from Stalin and his policies. Postyshev, for example, was the troubleshooter whom Stalin had entrusted to bring the Ukrainian Party under control and extinguish its "nationalist deviation" but who, according to Kostiuk, in time became sympathetic with the local culture and alienated from Stalin. Cf. Kostiuk, *op.cit.*, pp. 116-117. Military commanders were probably also drawn into the growing anti-Stalin opposition. Krushchev's "thaw" of 1956 was the belated resurgence of that inner-Party Stalinist opposition. Thus, the first to be rehabilitated during his regime were "former Stalinists [including Postyshev] and they were followed by persons in non-political categories, scientists, industrial managers, and members of the intelligentsia." Cf. Levytsky, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

75. Thus, Beria used his career in the secret police to obtain control over the Party in Georgia as Bagirov had in much the same way become head of the Party in Azerbaidzhan.

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relied upon, rather than the Party, the more threatened were the Stalinist Party leaders and the more resistant they became and the more therefore Stalin relied upon the secret police and state bureaucracy rather than the Party. Put differently, the more Stalin sought to bypass the Party because of its opposition, the more he fostered this opposition.[76] In the end, therefore, the Party itself had to be destroyed.

Krushchev's account of the fate of the delegates to the 17th Congress reveals how central a target of the purges they were, and how totally they were destroyed: "of the 139 members and candidates of the Party's Central Committee who were elected at the 17th Party Congress, 98 persons, i.e., 70 percent, were arrested and shot mostly in 1937-1938... What was the composition of the delegates to the 17th Congress? It is known that 80 percent of the voting participants of the 17th Congress joined the Party during the years of conspiracy before the Revolution and during the Civil War; this means, before 1921. By social origin, the basic mass of the delegates were workers. (Sixty percent of the voting members)...of 1,966 delegates with either voting or advisory rights, 1,108 were arrested on charges of anti-revolutionary crimes, i.e., decidedly more than a majority."[77] Sakharov maintains that "in 1936 to 1939 alone, more than 1.2 million party members, half the total membership, were arrested. Only 500,000 regained freedom. The others...were shot (600,000) or died in camps."[78] By 1939, 60 percent of those who had been Party members in 1933 were no longer members.[79] Most of the Party membership at the time of the 18th Congress in 1939 had not been members during the 17th Congress in 1934. Prior to the 18th Congress,

76. Moishe Lewin (in Tucker, *op.cit.*, pp. 130ff), sees the bureaucracy as wanting to settle down and regularize their careers, and thus as wanting to limit Stalin's power, having him serve as *primus inter pares*, i.e., as the chief executive of a powerful central committee. Lewin believes that Stalin began the purges because he was not ready to be just another member of the system, however powerful. Thus Lewin essentially views the Stalinist opposition in a Weberian way, as the outgrowth of the inner logic of bureaucratization, rather than expressing political differences that had a certain autonomy. But top bureaucrats *also* had a *political* tendency. They were not simply careerist technocrats concerned only about their tenure and devoid of organizational moralities or political sentiments. The Central Committee, for example, was apparently opposed to purging Bukharin and Rykov in 1937; and in 1934 the Kirov tendency sought an end to the terror in the countryside and moved toward "reconciliation." These were political, indeed, ideological, motives. Morever, the Central Committee's resistance in 1937 placed them all in the greatest personal jeopardy, as they certainly knew it would. How can such great risk-taking behavior, indeed, such courageous behavior, be accounted for in terms of a quest for bureaucratic security? These men were not just acting to protect their private careers or even their lives, but also to enforce their conception of the Party. Indeed, they were enacting a larger idea of a rational social order. A "vulgar idealism" would focus only on the latter, forgetting that we need to examine *why* men act in conformity with their norms; a vulgar materialism would ignore these norms and focus, in a Weberian or Michelsian way, only on the bureaucracy's pursuit of its own vested interests as a status group. I have sought to avoid both. Lewin's appraisal rests on an uncritically appropriated Weberian view that bureaucratization necessarily means depoliticization, akin to Jürgen Habermas' view of the undermining of the public sphere by the rise of a technocratic bureaucracy.

77. Krushchev, *op.cit.*, p. 21.

78. Cited by Conquest, *op.cit.*, p. 73.

79. Cf. MacNeal, *Resolutions...*, *op.cit.*, p. 9. "The high point of 3.5 million members was achieved as early as 1933 while as late as 1938 membership was down to 1.9 members and candidates."

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about half a million officials in the Party and in the Government had been replaced.

A Stalinist Criminology

Medvedev relates the following Brechtian anecdote from 1937-38: "A knock comes on the door at night and a voice bellows out roughly, 'NKVD! Open up!' 'But we're non-Party people,' they answer from behind the locked door. 'The Communists are the next flight up."

The terror of the late 1930s thus destroyed the old Communist Party, which was not seriously rebuilt until Krushchev's regime.[80] This had been necessitated by the fact that the Party was developing a moderate anti-Stalin bloc and, notwithstanding its authoritarian hierarchy, it was the only remaining political medium for the expression of popular sentiment.[81] But the Party was not the only institution that was destroyed: also destroyed was the established military elite.[82]

The results of this were visible soon after in the Finnish-Russian War of 1940, when so many of the poorly led and equipped Russian troops were massacred by the Finns or froze to death. When the Russians finally won, it was purely because of vast numerical superiority. The purge of the Red Army also meant, again in Krushchev's words, "very grievous consequences in reference to the beginning of the war. . ." when a year later the Nazis plunged deep into Russia and overran its disrupted armies.[83] The Nazi colonial policy that defined Slavs, especially Slavic peasants, as subhuman and which treated

80. Stalin killed and tortured more Communists than any other dictator in the 20th century, whether Hitler, the Czar, the Shah of Iran, or the Chilean Junta. That he regarded the Communists as so intransigently menacing to his regime was perhaps the last generous historical testimonial ever made to Communists.

81. The Party was disposed to function in that manner precisely to the extent that provincial cadres became incorporated into it. These provincial cadres (distant from Moscow's surveillance) had been growing in importance from 1930 onward, and were naturally closer to the views and interest of local constituencies. They might, therefore, be expected to support Kirov's policy of reconciliation.

82. Krushchev calls this terror against the Red Army's officer corps an "annihilation." Well-known members of the general staff, such as Marshals Tukachevsky and Bluecher, and Generals Gamarnik and Yakir, were killed, along with the commanders of all the military districts, practically all brigade commanders, a half of all the regimental commanders, and all but one fleet commander. In addition to killing 13 of the 15 generals, 80 percent of all colonels were killed or removed, as were 30,000 officers below the rank of colonel. Between 35 to 50 percent of the entire officer corps was eliminated. More senior officers were killed during the purges than during the entire war with the Nazis. The most experienced and talented officers of the Red Army, including those who had gained military experience in Spain and in the Far East, were, as Krushchev states, "almost entirely liquidated." Cf. Krushchev, *op.cit.*, p. 39.

83. Soon after the invasion, General Vlasov, one of the most popular and brilliant of the general staff (who had survived the purge) went over to the Nazis. After having been captured by them Vlasov organized 200,000 disillusioned Soviet troops to fight alongside the Germans against their own nation. Vlasov's ability to muster Soviet troops against the USSR indicates how deeply the Soviet masses had been alienated by the Regime. Indeed, during World War II, no other European country had such a mass defection of its troops to the enemy, nor was there anything like the mass disaffection in the Ukraine that Djilas reports. Robert Conquest quotes a Polish prisoner of war who remarked: "I think with horror and shame of a Europe divided into two parts by the line of the Bug, on one side of which millions of Soviet slaves prayed for liberation by the armies of Hitler, and on the other, millions of victims of German concentration camps awaited deliverance by the Red Army as their last hope."

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them bestially following the invasion of Western USSR, soon destroyed many Russian peasants' illusions about the Nazis. Ultimately, it may have been Nazi racist ideology and the colonial policy it shaped in Eastern Europe that tipped the balance against Germany.

The terror of the 1930s permeated the everyday life and most intimate experience of the Soviet people. Most estimates agree that about 5 percent of its population were imprisoned during the period, making a total of some eight million persons, of whom perhaps 10 percent were killed. By 1938, almost every other Soviet family had had one of its members imprisoned. The proportions, however, were substantially higher, the more educated the group. The terror of the 1930s differed from that of the collectivization in that it was directed against the urban population, against political and military elites, and against the better educated intelligentsia. It was directed primarily against urban males in the age group 30-55, although their women and children also suffered terribly when the men were denounced and arrested. The terror of the collectivization period, however, was directed primarily against the rural population and all members of families in that group, including children.

Under Stalinist terror, persons were not prosecuted because of what they individually had done, said or even believed, but because there was need of a public accounting system in which what was done to them might seem rational and justified. Most commonly, there was no individual guilt and what happened to the accused was not punishment but a ritual of punishment aimed at placating world liberal opinion. In most cases, then, persons were jailed, shot or exiled not because of what they had done but because of their supposed readiness to do injury to Soviet society inferred on the basis of their social category: social origin, nationality or group membership.[84]

This imputation of criminal guilt from persons' social category is related to the "conditioning model" of personality implicit in "scientific" Marxism according to which the essence of persons is not their individual consciousness or ideology, but their "social being" that determines that consciousness. Since people's true being cannot be established from what they say about themselves—for they may have a false consciousness—or even from what they do—since they may dissimulate deliberately to conceal their guilt—it is the social categories that establish their social essence. This is the core of the Stalinist theory of crime and punishment that guided the terror. Given the devaluation of what people say, Stalinism could not place credence in the very confessions that it used as practically the only evidence against the accused. The confessions were primarily public confirmations of proclivities imputed to persons on the basis of their social category.

84. A person's social category, then, largely determined his fate. Those who had foreign connections or acquaintances were most vulnerable, as were religious or former religious functionaries; one-time members of former political parties; generals and colonels in the Red Army; Kulaks, the so-called "former people" or ex-aristocrats; members of the Communist Party. Railroad workers, for some unclear reason, belonged to an especially hazardous category. So, too, did those who had once been arrested by the secret police and released.

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Within such a context, the critical distinction between real and potential guilt was conflated into the encompassing category of the *virtually* guilty. The production of confessions was thus routine. Being words only, confessions were not intended to convince. They were part of a bureaucratic ritualism designed to pacify; they were arguments to which the Party faithful around the world could point to persuade the morally needy. The object of the confession and of Soviet terror more generally was to terrorize and deter a population that scientific socialists could only expect, because of its social characteristics, to oppose the Bolshevik Regime. The aim of the terror was to paralyze the expected opposition until such time as the new industrialization would produce a proletariat whose sentiments would presumably be loyally socialist. It was the new industrial economy that was to be decisive, in the reckoning of the scientific Marxism on which Stalin and Lenin had both grounded their voluntaristic politics. The essence of both Leninism and Stalinism, then, was precisely this fusion of a relatively voluntaristic politics with a model of economic development that stressed industrial development seen as a matter of fostering technological hardware (e.g., "electrification") and the "forces of production."

Chinese Perspectives: Toward a Comparative View

Maoism, of course, had a different reading of Marxism. While its politics was also voluntaristic, its model of economic development placed less emphasis on developing the forces of production and on the urban sector. It operated with a different conception of human nature and thus generated a different strategy for change. Maoism placed more systematic reliance on coercive persuasion and militant mind "washing." There was terror—routinized, deliberate and horrible—but at the same time there was substantially less blood spilled than under Stalinism. In place of the Stalinist axe, the Maoist carefully slit the vein, letting it bleed for a guarded interval. This is no trivial thing to the millions of Chinese who were spared that holocaust, and raises the question of why it was that, despite its ideological affection for Stalinist voluntarism, Maoism never really succumbed to the extremes of Stalinism.

The Maoists were able to do this in part because they had *alternatives* to terror, but these were not altogether due to differences in the objective structures of Russian and Chinese society. In the Chinese revolution as in the Russian a militant revolutionary elite had come to power in a society overwhelmingly peasant, and yet the Chinese did not emulate the Russians bloody revolution. How may we account for this difference?

The Chinese Communists could develop alternatives to extreme terror because they had made a different reading of Marxism, which involved different assumptions about human personality. To the Maoists, even class enemies were not beyond change in consciousness. There was the slogan, "Cure the disease, change the man." From the Chinese standpoint, therefore, a "confession" was a different and more serious matter than it was to the

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Russians: it was the starting point in a long process of changing the enemy's consciousness. The Chinese stress on "thought reform," even though grounded in coercive persuasion, premissed that persons' beliefs and loyalties could be changed sincerely whatever their class position, and well before the advent of an advanced socialist industry.

Maoism also had a different conception of socialism and of the peasantry's ability to build it. The Chinese did not stress rapid industrialization and urbanization; they did not have the same abiding distrust of the peasantry as the Russians had; and they therefore did not have to subject the Chinese peasantry to the same crushing internal colonialism deployed by the CPSU.[85] Consequently, although they had no more material rewards to motivate the peasantry than the Russians, the Chinese Communist Party did not alienate the peasantry so profoundly that they could be controlled only by extreme terror.

After defeat of the Canton uprising and their "long march" north, the Chinese Communists settled into the countryside. Living and fighting among the peasantry, they acquired extensive experience in administering a peasant society long before they finally assumed state power on the Chinese mainland. Not only did the Chinese Communists acquire an administrative and political culture that subsequently facilitated their mobilization of the peasantry, but it also gave them the opportunity to build an *organizational* apparatus in the countryside.[86] This allowed the Chinese Communist Party to develop a leadership with a rural background. During much of this time, moreover, the Chinese Party was waging a long war of national liberation against the

85. The Chinese road to collectivized agriculture differed importantly from that of the Russians. As Tse Ka-kui points out, under Mao's influence Chinese collectivization did not propose to limit the use of rural mechanization to seasonal "storming" but sought to integrate it with everyday work; stressed the development of rural industry in conjunction with collectivization; and called for self-financing of mechanization rather than state subsidies. Moreover, the Chinese moved in stages from peasant mutual aid to cooperatives to more highly integrated communes, all the while stressing the importance of political education in the countryside. Cf. Tse Ka-kui, "Agricultural Collectivization and Socialist Construction, *Dialectical Anthropology*, forthcoming.

86. Communist Party cells in the countryside may have been almost twice as prevalent in China as in Russia at the time each achieved state power. Moreover, even by 1930, after the Russian collectivization drive began, "the overwhelming majority of kolkhozes lacked party cells and would continue to for another generation." I concur with Lewin that the Bolsheviks "never constituted a real mass movement...in the countryside...Bolsheviks were an urban party par excellence, ignorant of rural realities and showing little patience with this mass, so backward and conservative." In Tucker, *op.cit.*, pp. 112, 122. This, of course, is related to their reading of "scientific Marxism." Although Marx deplored the split between town and country and expected that Communism would ultimately overcome it, in this split he clearly sided with the town against "rural idiocy," viewing the town as the site of modern industry, technological development and science, and hence as the locus of modern progress. As for the peasantry, according to Marx and Engels, they are doomed to extinction and thus they constitute a reactionary class. According to the *Manifesto*, "the other classes decay and disappear in the face of modern industry...the lower middle-class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these...are not revolutionary but conservative, Nay more, they are reactionary!" Cf. the *Communist Manifesto* (Chicago, 1888), pp. 26-27. The best discussion of the urban bias of Marxism is in Maurice Meissner, "Utopian Socialist Themes in Maoism," in John Wilson Lewis, ed., *Peasant Rebellion and Communist Revolution in Asia* (Stanford, 1974).

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Japanese; it effectively assumed control of the national identity, which provided a framework for building collaborative relationships in the countryside as elsewhere. In sharp contrast, the Bolsheviks, far from continuing the war against the Germans, had long advocated "turning the guns the other way" and had capitulated to them at Brest-Litovsk. Rather than being defined as "patriots," the Bolsheviks were often accused of being German agents and spies. Indeed, they did receive substantial funds from the German High Command, funneled to them through the special liaison of Trotsky's former collaborator, Alexander Helphand (Parvus) and others.[87]

The Maoists' ability to find and use alternatives to terror was also related to the very concepts of social control used by rural persons which differ appreciably from those of urban origin. Being more anonymous, and linked by single-purpose associations, when urban people find one another behaving in ways they resent they have quicker recourse to the state's coercion: they call the police. Rural people, however, live in more communal groups, where persons are known individually by name. The rural model of social control, then, uses personal appeal, indirection, the manipulation of connections. In short, it has a multiplicity of practiced strategies to produce conformity: it has numerous alternatives to recourse to force. Furthermore, it was not necessary. The Chinese Party's care in fostering an ideological receptivity to collectivization was matched by the Chinese peasants' openness to it because they often did not have land enough for subsistence.[88] Thus, they lacked the Russian peasants' motives for deep-seated resistance to collectivization. The Russian revolution had distributed land to the peasants in order to win their support during the Civil War and, with NEP, it was the middle, not the poor, peasantry who grew in numbers and strength.[89] The road to forced collectivization, then, could only have been aimed against the majority of middle peasants, however formally directed at "kulaks."

Last but not least, the Chinese were able to avoid the extremes of Stalinism because they were not exposed to the same acute international threat as the new Soviet state, partly because the very consolidation of the latter had provided the Chinese with a powerful military cover. While this was particularly the case when the Chinese Communist Party first assumed

87. Z.A.B. Zeman and W.B. Scharlau, *The Merchant of Revolution: The Life of Alexander Israel Helphand (Parvus), 1867-1924* (London, 1965).

88. As Lucien Bianco writes in his *Origins of the Chinese Revolution, 1915-1949* (Stanford, 1971), pp. 94-95: "On the eve of the Communist revolution... even the richest man in the village rarely owned more than 50 acres... [only] a little more than half the Chinese peasants owned the land they tilled... Ten percent of the rural families owned slightly more than half the land." According to Bianco's figures, the rural proletariat who owned no land and the poor peasants who owned the least, together comprised 68 percent of rural families. *Ibid.*, p. 97 note.

89. The poor peasants were only about 30 percent of the peasantry; the rich peasants were only a tenth of their number—i.e., about 3 percent; the remaining 67 percent were the middle peasants. (This was in 1927, two years before Stalin's decree calling for the liquidation of the kulaks and the resulting forced collectivization. In short, two-thirds of the peasantry were middle peasants. The kulaks were only a tiny minority who could not have constituted a significant threat to the Soviet state or to its grain requirements. See Charles Bettleheim, *Les Luttes de Classes en URSS: Deuxième Periode, 1923-1930, op.cit.*, p. 80.

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control of the mainland, it remains true, even today after the schism with the Russian Party, that no military power can confidently expect that the Soviet state will allow a massive incursion into the Chinese mainland.

Some Theoretical Conclusions

This reconnaisance of Stalinism has been provisional, fragmentary, and sometimes unavoidably elementary. Yet it may be useful to attempt to sort out some of the more general conclusions, recalling the preliminary specification of Stalinism as a *regime* of terror in furtherance of a property transfer, entailing a personal dictatorship and bureaucracy. The central question throughout has been: why the terror? Most especially, why did such extremes of terror characterize Stalinism?

Terror is simply one means a state employs under certain conditions. The historical particulars of Stalinism suggest some of these conditions: Terror is used when the state wishes to elicit certain compliances—e.g., grain deliveries—from those whom it defines in a particular way, i.e., not as unable but as unwilling to provide them, or as resistant to its demands. To that extent, terror is a substitute for moral suasion. It becomes such when those on whom demands are made are not seen by the center as part of its own moral *community*, as the peasants were not by the leaders of the Communist "vanguard" who defined themselves primarily in relation to the proletariat. Not being a part of the same moral community, the principle of reciprocity is not felt to apply and correspondingly, a deliberate strategy of exploitation—e.g., "primitive socialist accumulation" or unequal exchange—is permitted. Thus, Stalinism developed as an internal colonialism.

What this means is that Stalinism was primarily a process of state-building grounded in a very specific set of class relations, i.e., one in which the classes are not part of, or are only tenuously part of, one single moral community. In consequence, the more powerful class may treat the weaker as an object of outright exploitation, as a natural resource to be plundered, and subject it to the most brutal violence as one state may treat a conquered foreign country.[90] The internal colonialism thesis links moments of routine, "peaceable" administration with critical moments of brutal violence, treating them as part of a single process of domination which one may alternately impose on another.

The internal colonialism thesis concerning Stalinism avoids the mythology of a Marxism which had speciously held that the alternative was socialism or barbarism. It further links state socialism with the capitalism it had promised to transcend and sees the peasants as the Soviets' Indians and the Soviet countryside as a continental reservation. The theory of internal colonialism is the underside of the theory of emancipation, beginning to clarify what must be avoided by socialists and suggesting, finally, what changes must come

90. Following Oppenheimer's "conflict theory" of state origins, the Stalinist state is thus a social institution forced by a victorious group of men on a defeated peasantry, securing itself against revolt from within and attacks from abroad. One of its major purposes was the economic exploitation of the vanquished by the victors. Cf. Franz Oppenheimer, *The State* (New York, 1975), p. 8.

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about in Soviet society before we may have confidence that Stalinism is dead once and for all.

Since the "vanguard" relates to a dependent peasantry in terms of an instrumental strategy of unequal exchange, the latter's unfavorable terms further dispose them to resist the demands of the control center. In short, the periphery's resistance is, in part, produced by the very policies pursued by the power center. In turn, this resistance confirms the center's expectation that the peripheral group is *deservedly* not a part of its own moral community, and has to be treated instrumentally. Although viewing the peripheral group as morally and culturally inferior, the center is nonetheless bound to it since it has no alternative sources of supply. The power center is dependent on the very peripheral group it dominates and may fear that its functional autonomy is undermined and with this also its capacity to protect its very identity. The resistant peripheral groups generate a "crisis of procurement" that may suffice to elicit a policy of terror against the periphery.[91]

When a regime opts for terror, it may be due simply to the fact that it lacks alternatives. Obviously, the Soviet state might have won compliance from the peasantry by offering them "material rewards" in the form of consumer goods, or ideological inducements rather than through a repressive terror. Its capacity to offer the former, however, was limited when the Bolshevik state was still attempting to generate an industrial takeoff. Its capacity to use moral suasion, however, was also limited by an ideologically shaped vision of the peasantry as "backward," unreliable material with which to build socialism. The Party's scientific socialism further led them to concentrate on urban activity and to neglect rural activity. Thus, the Party was ideologically prepared to expect that the peasantry would be reluctant to collaborate in the building of socialism. These same ideological commitments impaired its ability to acquire experience and to develop Party organizations in the countryside, thus limiting its capacity to generate alternatives to terror against the peasants. The Party's alternatives, then, were never only a matter of "objective necessity" but were always partly a function of its own policy commitments and ideology.[92]

91. A regime of terror differs from war in that it does not seek to annihilate opponents but aims primarily to crush their resistance and to produce compliance. While the decree of 1929 was presumably limited to the liquidation of the kulaks, its object was to crush resistance among a vast peasantry that the Party Center could on no account imagine itself liquidating. Similarly, the purges and terror of the 1930s could not hope to eliminate the urban elites against whom it was aimed.

92. The more economists have analyzed Soviet development, the less convinced they become that forced collectivization, the primeval trauma at the root of Stalinism, was unavoidable. I do not find them altogether persuasive. Some "revisionist" studies of Soviet development have, for example, held that in the transfers between the agricultural and industrial sectors in Russia before 1932, the net balance favored the agricultural rather than the industrial sector. That is, that the value of the latter's contribution to agriculture was more than the value of the goods it extracted from agriculture. When such a conclusion is advanced by Russian economists, one suspects it as an act of ideological piety. Quite apart from a general uneasiness about the pliability of Soviet economists, the problem seems an extremely difficult one to resolve, particularly with quantitative data.

Some of the very things held to constitute a contribution, by the urban-industrial sector to the

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Bureaucracy, no less than terror, is a mechanism for dealing with a resistant population on whom a ruling group is dependent for goods and services. Both are ways a power center employs for controlling population sectors on whom it is dependent, but whom it cannot otherwise replace, motivate or mobilize. Terror is more likely to be used when the resistance is expected to be active and concerted; bureaucracy is used when resistance is more passive and atomized. Both terror and bureaucracy are systems of domination imposing subservience upon subordinate sectors and extracting compliance from them. Bureaucratization is the routinization of domination; terror arises when routines of domination collapse in the face of mounting crisis, or before routines of domination have yet developed. A challenge to a center engaged in internal colonialism may alternately foster bureaucracy or terror, both simultaneously, or a sequence in which terror is used early, as a holding action until bureaucratic routines and institutions can be built and is later phased out as the bureaucracy develops. Terror and bureaucracy are each ways of reaching down into and dominating a group from some point outside its own ranks, by those who do not belong to it.

A new revolutionary government, which has recently taken power by smashing the old state, distrusts the remnant bureaucracy, but has not yet had a chance to replace it with a new loyal one. In a socialist society, the problem of maintaining the loyalty of bureaucrats faces certain special problems and constraints. For to the extent that the culture of socialism embodies a populistic egalitarianism, special privileges for the bureaucracy may be inhibited and-or, as in the modern Soviet case, discretely kept from

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agricultural, may in fact be costs incurred by internal colonialism in dominating the peasantry. It is questionable, for example, whether the cost of prison bars, walls, guns and guards should be counted as the state's investment in the welfare of prisoners or as a return for inmate labor. It seems meaningless to speak of the value of goods and services that people do not want, as a compensatory return for their work and produce. Moreover, the investments or produce of both sectors is assigned a value or price by only *one* of them, those at the center of the system of internal colonialism, who assign unequal values to their respective investments. Given an internal colonialism, the very terms of trade are no longer comparable because they are the very mechanism by which one party exploits the other. If this is correct, then what might it mean to say that the industrial sector had invested more in agriculture than the value of the latter's product that it extracted? Moreover, what if in its effort to exploit the peasantry, the urban center generates a backlash and widespread dis-economies for which it must then pay. Shall the value of the cities' contribution to agriculture include the costs of their dominating it, and in addition the costs of their own incompetence? Finally, the revisionist critique of the conventional view of Soviet capital accumulation has one interesting side effect: it leaves us with no clear theory of how rapid capital and industrial growth was made possible in the USSR.

These difficulties, however, do not really touch our own analysis, for there is little question but that the view of industrialization dominant in the CPSU prior to the collectivization and which shaped its actions, emphasized primary accumulation through exploitation of the peasantry. The Party's policies were shaped by its situation and by its understanding of it. As Leninists, they would be the first to insist that their theory was no mere ornamental embellishment. Like others, the Party's consciousness necessarily affected its actions; but more than others, the Party was militantly committed to the idea that it should. For the revisionist view, see James R. Millar, "Soviet Rapid Development and the Agricultural Surplus Hypothesis," *Soviet Studies*, July 1970; James R. Millar, "Mass Collectivization and the Contribution of Soviet Agriculture to the First Five Year Plan," *Slavic Review*, December 1974; Jerzy F. Karcz, "Back on the Grain Front," *Soviet Studies*, October 1970; and Moishe Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power* (London, 1968).

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public scrutiny. Furthermore, a socialist bureaucracy will initially have to recruit relatively educated persons from the very privileged sectors of society it is attacking, so that its loyalty will be suspect. Far from being a sure instrument of control in a new socialist society, the bureaucracy's reliability is acutely problematic.

One way to overcome this potential unreliability and cope with bureaucratic resistance is to establish new hierarchies of custodians over the custodians, special intelligence units, each of whom, however, are as unreliable as the bureaucracies they are to oversee. Thus the Cheka begets the OGPU who begets the NKVD who begets the KGB. A bureaucracy specializing in the administration of terror surfaces at the pinnacle of the system. But if bureaucracy is a functional alternative to terror, it also prevents the complete renunciation of terror for even the bureaucracies administering the terror are suspect.[93]

Subject to these extraordinary pressures, the bureaucracy seeks to protect itself by supporting unconditionally the continuing growth of its master's powers, contributing to the concentration of his power, to a possible cult of personality. In obeying its masters, the bureaucracy commonly earns the hostility of the resistant populace over whom it has been set, while the bureaucracy and its controllers soon develop an ambivalent solidarity—the solidarity of a dog and its master—against the rest of society. Since it is exposed to the most extreme punishments from its masters, even to terror, and since its privileges also depend on them, the bureaucracy is led into fawning obedience, thus competing with if not replacing the Party as the ruler's instrument. It is out of such a shifting balance between Party and bureaucracy that there may emerge that other characteristic of Stalinism—the personal dictatorship.

Both terror and bureaucracy are somewhat interchangeable mechanisms of domination. Both essentially serve as alternatives to a system of voluntary exchange between social sectors because the voluntary exchange has been impaired by a system of domination, e.g., by an internal colonialism, in which the controlling center has imposed unfavorable rates of exchange on those subordinated to it. Thus, a regime of terror is not, as Walters claims,[94] a response to a crisis of integration. This Durkheimian formulation premisses that the terror is a response to the needs of the society (or system) as a whole and conceives these needs objectivistically. It implies that it is the needs of society-as-a-whole that produce the terror and that, in fact, the terror does indeed "integrate" the society. In the case of Stalinism, both implications are in error.

Soviet society was not integrated laterally by the terror, but was rather

93. Thus, during the purges of 1930s the NKVD itself in time became a particular target of the terror; many were hunted down in their privileged apartment compounds, driven to suicide, and some had been seen throwing themselves from the windows of the secret police headquarters at the height of the purges.

94. E.V. Walters, *op.cit.*, chapter 13.

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fragmented and atomized as husbands and wives, children and parents, lovers and friends, grew wary and fearful of expressing "dangerous" views even in intimate company. Moreover, it is also doubtful whether Soviet society was "integrated" even hierarchically by the terror. The flow of upward information diminished, along with trust in superiors, and there was a loss in the expectation of their continued presence in authority. A social system cannot be called "integrated" when obedience is given out of fear and the least deviance is hidden. Furthermore, terror was most definitely not a response to the needs of Soviet society as a whole. No social system need is ever pursued in an unmediated way. The sheer definition of what a system "needs" is always formulated more by some and less by other groups. Groups at the power center pre-empt the right to define social reality for the system as a whole against competing definitions from the peripheries. Usually, they define the system's needs in selective ways, accommodating them to their own special interests, power and prerogatives. They often do so with utter sincerity since they also define themselves as "fathers of their people," indispensable to the collective welfare. System needs, then, are never given by the system, i.e., they are never given objectivistically. The destruction of the Communist Party's cadres, or of the Soviet military leadership, was not a "system need" at all. In the beginning it was, rather, a response to the threat to the power of the Stalinist faction, but, at some point, it was not even that, as the Stalinists themselves became divided and their faction narrowed down to the supreme despot himself. The policies followed were neither in the interest of some system need nor were they always a response to the limited interests of some partisan group, faction or strata. Indeed, the entire assumption that policy must be in *some* group's interest is sorely taxed by the Stalinist experience. The destruction of the Communist Party cadres and of the Red Army's leadership did not contribute to the welfare of the Soviet nation but actually impaired its ability to survive the Nazi invasion. Indeed, Stalin could not have better served the Nazi interest if he had been a German agent.[95] The forced

95. The purge of the Soviet Army High Command was engineered by Nazi intelligence. With the special involvement of Heydrich, intricately forged documents were transmitted to the NKVD to demonstrate that the Soviet High Command had been conspiring with the German High Command. (There seems to be a strong possibility that the same maneuver was, in the beginning, also designed by the Nazis against the German Army's own High Command, but this side of the matter was dropped.) Far from being a "*need* of the Soviet system," the destruction of the Soviet Command was sought by the Nazis because they conceived it to *their own great advantage* that Tukachevsky, the Red Army's most brilliant strategist, be destroyed. There seems little doubt that their estimate of the matter was correct: "The purge of the generals proved to be exactly as the SD [*Sicherheitsdienst*] hoped, a crippling blow to the war capability of the Red Army. The catastrophe of June-October 1941, in which the USSR was caught completely unawares by the German invasion, losing millions of men and the results of years of industrial construction, must be overwhelmingly attributed to the disappearance of any experienced military command after 1937. It was more than a blunder; it was a crime. . . contrary to popular legend, the Wehrmacht at no time had military superiority over the Soviet Armies on the frontier. The exact opposite was the case. The Red Army deployed in forward positions outnumbered the German forces on the Eastern Front by 30 divisions in June 1941. Not only this. The Red Army had a staggering seven to one superiority in tanks. . . even in the air, the USSR had a four to one superiority in planes over the Luftwaffe." "Introduction to Tukachevsky," *New Left Review, op.cit.*, p. 88. Cf. John

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collectivization was no response to the needs of Soviet society but, at most, to the needs of the isolated and beseiged CPSU, and, more accurately, of only one wing of the Party, seeking to saddle the nation with a system of internal colonialism. Stalinist terror thus cannot be understood from the standpoint of a systems analyst. It is also questionable whether it is even intelligible in terms of "conflict theory" if this implies that policy is shaped by some status group seeking its partisan *group* advantage. At some point in Stalinist Russia, all *groups*—including the secret police—became instruments that were discarded without compunction when the supreme person thought it advantageous. Like the successive layers of an onion, then, the group basis of Stalinism can be continuously stripped away without revealing any final *group* foundation which its policies can be said to express. Yet, whether composed of groups or despots, power centers do pursue group welfare only to the extent that this also contributes to the reproduction of the power center. The language of "system needs" is a rhetoric legitimating special interests seeking to universalize their vested interests. "Integration" is the language of a legitimated domination, i.e., of hegemony. If the interests of the system as a whole were indeed being pursued, there would be no need for a bureaucratic regime of terror. To speak of the events leading up to Stalinism as a response to a "system need" is more than a theoretical conceit; it is a grand obfuscation. The core of what happened was a property transfer bitterly and solidly resisted by those who lost out.

In ending these "theoretical conclusions," I want briefly to call attention to the implication our discussion has for two other theoretical issues. One is its bearing on what I have called the "social history" paradigm of Stalinist historiography, which emphasizes the "force of circumstances" while de-emphasizing the way in which the Bolsheviks *defined* their situation, especially insofar as this was informed by their *theory and ideology*. It is impossible to understand Bolshevik decisions apart from an understanding of their special reading of Marxism, i.e., "scientific socialism." The point is clearly not that what the Bolsheviks did was always (or even mainly) the mirror image of their theory, or that it was done because it was prescribed theoretically. What they did was partly shaped by their theory and remains unintelligible apart from it. The "social history" paradigm founders here because of its failure systematically to distinguish between behavior that is theoretically *prescribed* and behavior theoretically *patterned,* between the intended and unintended consequences of theoretical commitments. The paradigm thus mistakenly concludes that, when difference developed between theory-policy and decisions, the latter were uninfluenced by theory. But this is equivalent to

Erickson, *The Soviet High Command* (New York, 1962), p. 584. It is also true, however, that a considerable proportion of the arms and equipment of the Red Army were then outmoded and obsolescent but this, too, was largely a function of the purges, especially of their disruption of Soviet industry. On the effect of the purges on Soviet industry, see Levytsky, *op.cit.*, and Seweryn Bialer, ed., *Stalin and His Generals* (New York, 1969), p. 63: "No single factor contributed more to undermine Soviet military leadership during the first phase of the Nazi-Soviet War than the Great Purge."

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concluding that, since the law is broken, it is without consequence.

Some adherents of the social history model, while more than ready to acknowledge the mediating importance of Russian culture and tradition, are perplexingly ready to write off the importance of the Bolshevik's version of Marxism.[96] In minimizing the role of Marxist theory for Bolshevik history, the proponents of the social history paradigm seek to avoid the unjustified conclusion that resulting events were the mechanical outcome of the "logic" of Marxism, and thus to clear the way for detailed scrutiny of the historical process. Yet the particular remedy they employ is unnecessary and underemphasizes the role of reason in history.

A final point bears on the Weber-Habermas thesis, according to which depoliticization is a result of the growth of technocracy and bureaucracy. The plain lesson of our analysis is that this decline is more the result of other forces. Far more depoliticization was wrought by the regime of terror than by the growth of technocracy. Politics and the public sphere are inversely related to terror and internal colonialism. While politics and terror are close neighbors they are separated by the boundary they share. Politics means that people must be treated as persons to whom power and moral responsibility are imputed and not as inmates in a labor and concentration camp. Politics means mobilizing consent through promises and offered understandings. Such consent is required under two conditions: first, when persons are defined as members of the same moral community and, secondly, insofar as they in fact possess power and resources enabling them to resist domination. With its system of internal colonialism, however, Stalinism meant the end of politics; its radical terror meant a radical depoliticization. Stalinism was one of two great cataclysms of depoliticization in 20th-century Europe, the other of course being Nazism and Fascism. In neither case, however, was depoliticization intelligible as a result of growing technocratic organization and staffs.

Under Stalinism, depoliticization did not originate in the technocracy or bureaucracy. On the contrary: the latter were the result of the drive to depoliticize society. The new state was created to destroy and control what it

96. Thus, Lewin invidiously contrasts the force of circumstances with the role of theory, maintaining that "in the hungry and anguished years 1920-1921...the elements of a solution [which Lewin calls 'statism'] were suggested by circumstances rather than by theoretical anticipation." In Tucker, *op.cit.*, p. 113. Yet, only a few lines later, Lewin himself also observes that "direct state intervention was recommended and justified by party authorities not on grounds of emergency, but as a socialist principle par excellence." Here the Bolsheviks are being transformed into pragmatic end-of-ideology liberals rather than seen for the uniquely ideological and theoretically committed men they were. What Lewin calls "statism" Marx had called the "dictatorship of the proletariat," which he insisted was the *distinctive* feature of his theory. The role of the state is fully affirmed in the *Communist Manifesto*; it is in the state, we are told, that the victorious proletariat will "centralize all instruments of production" (cf. *Communist Manifesto, op.cit.*, p. 42) as well as the means of communication, transport and credit facilities. It was not "socialization" of the means of production but the transfer of private productive property to the *state*—i.e., its nationalization—that was the central object of Marxist scientific socialism from the beginning. Why, then, should we believe that the Bolsheviks were deluding themselves in referring to their principles and theory to account for their position on state intervention?

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defined as a class enemy within, and the armed forces of a class enemy abroad. The destruction of the Soviet public sphere was not the work of techno-bureaucrats but of the CPSU who, finding itself almost totally isolated, depoliticized society for fear that any political expression endangered its own position. Yet, resistance to the total annihilation of the public sphere was grounded in the interests of the Party itself and in the very faction within it that had first been most intent on destroying it. This hesitant effort to revive the public sphere, the so-called "thaw," was primarily the effort of the very technocracy and intelligentsia which, according to the Habermas-Weber theory, supposedly undermined it. Lacking a public sphere, however, the material and ideal interests of the technical and political elite were endangered and they became vulnerable to purges and terror. Thus, the very destruction of the public sphere ultimately created a counter-tendency in which even this authoritarian elite came to need a public sphere for its own protection. Although inclined at some point to resuscitate the public sphere, the elite could not embrace it for fear that it would be held to account for its own past actions. It was out of this ambivalence that Krushchevism was born and by which it is defined.

Having come this far, it would be tempting to nail down the political implications of our analysis. I shall resist that temptation. Politics too easily comes down to a firing squad in a dim basement and is, therefore, something that no one should squeeze into a bright paragraph or two to advertise his relevance. The kind of theoretical reflection I have undertaken here flies low, hugging the rugged terrain of history, economics, sociology and anthropology. This form of reflection is as incompatible with the political posturings of the little Lenins as it is with the pop profundities of the *nouvelle philosophie*. We need to preserve an awareness of complexity that will not capitulate to anxiety's pressure for premature closure.

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THE FRENCH LEFT*

by Cornelius Castoriadis

Baudelaire said that the world advances only through misunderstandings. Apparently, the Left parties have a good chance of winning the March 1978 elections. Such a victory would almost certainly bring an end (either temporarily or indefinitely) to the post-1968 period of political tranquility.[1] Yet, there is a tremendous split between political appearance and political reality. On the one hand, there is what parties say they are and what they will do: their self-representations. On the other hand, there is what they really are and will really do. There is a split between these parties' popular image and their reality. There is likewise a split between the reasons that voters give for voting one way or another, and their true motives: between their representations to themselves of the effects of their votes, and the real effects of their votes.

This phenomenon is certainly as old as politics itself, and more precisely, as old as parliamentary elections. For decades, people have voted for parties that they know, or should know, will do something quite different from what they had promised.[2] Surely, too, the March 1978 vote for the Left will be, as always, just as much a vote *against*: against the established system, the parties that represent it, political and economic inequality, disorder, the stupidity of power; also against a series of "conjunctural" phenomena such as unemployment, inflation, etc.

In a leftist vote, whatever is not hollow rhetoric or empty phrases, whatever is not skillful camouflage of a process in which trade union and political apparatuses get their hands on the management of enterprises,[3] returns essentially to the "nationalization" of several large capitalist groups and to certain economic measures aimed at a limited redistribution of revenues. Can one believe that these themes truly mobilize the French population in 1977? To be sure, today few people, even outside the Left, believe in the necessity or the virtue of large capitalist groups. But how many are there who think that Renault, Air France, les Charbonnages de France, l'EDF-GDF (the gas and electric industry) treat their employees (or the users and consumers of their products) differently from the large private firms? Do the people see in

*This is an abridged version of a longer article originally written in July 1977 before the break of the Left Coalition. Translated by Bart Grahl, Susan Wheeler, Dorothy Gehrke, Bob D'Amico, Bill Hamilton and John Fekete.

1. What this refers to is the period after the interlude of May-June 1968, when the population ceased to participate actively in public affairs, leaving the field to politicians.

2. Note that this is primarily a question of Left voters. What conservative parties promise regardless of what their rhetoric may be is that they will conserve—and, it is true, they do conserve after a fashion. Deception is a privilege of the Left, and illusion the lot of its electors.

3. This is called "the establishment of democratic structures of management." Cf. the pertinent remarks of C. and J. Broyelle and E. Tchirhart in *Deuxième Retour de Chine* (Paris, 1977), pp. 264-274.

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the nationalization of "nationalizables" a step toward an integrated "nationalization" of the economy that would qualitatively change its character? Still, it is difficult to concede that they have failed to draw conclusions—or even doubts—from Eastern Europe in the last twenty years. It is also difficult not to recognize that the idea of widespread, integrated nationalization evokes the suspicion or open hostility of most Left voters. Can it not be said, moreover, that they are in favor of the elimination of large private profits and of the privileges and powers of traditional management and that, in so far as they still believe in the myths of "knowledge," "competence," or "technicity," they are more tolerant of the privileges and power of modern bureaucratic management? But they are quite a distance from viewing the latter as their salvation.

"Social" and "economic" measures—such as the resurrection of the minimum wage, reduction in the length of the workday, lowering of the retirement age, raising of old age and disability pensions—all of these attract justified attention, especially since they are accompanied by the claim that they are meant to "make the rich pay" (which *L'Humanité* never fails to support). But in fact implementing these measures would simply bring about in one or two years what would take four or five under the present regime. In contrast, there is the quasi-certitude of a social and political crisis and the reactions of the rich, who are supposed to be made to pay. Obviously, the calculations and motivations of the voters are not simply "economic."

It is impossible to make the bold claim that the voters would trust the Socialist and Communist parties to resolve the problems and to face the consequences. One would have to ignore the weakening of the parties' hold on the population (witness, for example, the low level of participation in political demonstrations), or forget that two thirds of Left voters are suspicious of the Communist Party and the remaining one third suspect the Socialist Party. In reality, everything is unfolding as though most, or at least half, of the French population had decided, calmly and quietly, that they wish to lock horns with the established regime, and as though they had accepted a perspective of uncertainty and instability, i.e., of crisis—a crisis of their own creation. The electorate seems ready to re-enter the political arena, should the occasion arise, in the midst of critical circumstances that are not "imposed" on it. This would constitute a rupture with the prevailing state of "tranquility," apathy, and privatization, a rupture all the more remarkable because the situation is far from "intolerable" for the great majority, and in particular, for those who will make the difference in the election results.

The concern here is not with election predictions; it is not the election as such that is important. But the only hypothesis worth discussion is of a Left victory. It is this widely shared hypothesis that gives significance to the fact that half of the population is prepared to set in motion, by its own action, a shake-up of the established system. The elements that justify this last proposition are generally familiar or discernible. It would be useful to specify the most important ones.

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First, the institutional and "political" elements. The beauty of the Fifth Republic's constitution is that it is tailored to the dimensions of Gaullist egotism, and it organizes the political crisis in the event that the new parliamentary majority differs from the old presidential majority—that is, in theory, every other time. Here we are not concerned with the tactics and maneuvers of Giscard and the present majority in case of a leftist victory. It is sufficient to note that an appeal to the electoral body will probably lead to an amplification of the election results. The tactic Giscard seems to favor—wait and see, and then take some kind of initiative, be it dissolution of the Assembly or recourse to Article 16 of the Constitution—presupposes that a reasonable period of time will pass in which the Left in power will prove its incapacity to govern, i.e., a period during which a crisis will develop.

Next, the economic situation. If Giscard had thought that with the "Barre Plan" he would be able to win on two fronts—a gradual slowing of the upward cost-and-price spiral in France, while the recovery in world expansion and the increase in French exports that that would foster, would assure a growth in demand and a decline in unemployment before the elections—he will have twice deceived himself. Following the recession of 1973-1975, the capitalist economy underwent a strong and unequivocal recovery in only one country—albeit the most important: the United States. But, for the moment, the United States remains incapable of pulling along the economies of other capitalist countries (notably Japan and Germany, which exercise considerable influence on the French economy). French exports grow at only a modest pace and the effects of this growth on overall demand in France are more than offset by the stagnation of investment, which is further weakened by current political anxieties. Meanwhile, the pace of price increases has hardly slackened and, in all probability, France will enter the March 1978 elections with a relatively significant level of unemployment.

The initial economic effects of a Left electoral victory may well bear a strong resemblance to the disastrous picture painted by the Right, and even before the Left has time to do anything: the flight of capital (what's left of it), amplification of inflation anxieties and acceleration of price increases, decline in the franc's exchange value (which would also mean a rise in the price of imports and additional effects on prices), speculative or precautionary stockpiling (by companies, retailers and households), shortages of goods, and freeze on investment capital.

It is not inconceivable that such an evolution would leave the population passive. But it will more likely give birth to new movements and new demands. It is also possible that such movements will act to increase the tensions at the heart of the new majority, between the "technocrats," pursuing a policy of austerity, and the "politicians," concerned to maintain or increase their supporters and thus claiming that the satisfaction of popular demands is perfectly possible *in the existing institutional framework under present conditions*. The Socialist Party itself would also very likely be plagued

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by these internal cleavages. The question would be whether the popular movements would confine themselves to the level of demands without venturing into the political arena.

In the abstract, France certainly has considerable margins for a rise in production and therefore in private and public consumption. But such abstractions are irrelevant. The productive apparatus can only function in a relatively coherent mode of management (of productive units) and integration (of the ensemble of these units). The current capitalist mode—bureaucratic management of enterprises subjected in some fashion to profitability and an oligopolistic pseudo-market—operates at a given level of efficiency. In much the same way it could be said of a thermal motor that it has an efficiency of x percent. It would be correct to think, and I do so strongly, that a collective economy, administered by associated producers, would result in much higher returns. But the "economy" envisioned by the Left would have an efficiency closer to zero; it is an incoherent fiction that obeys neither capitalist "logic" nor any other—and which by virtue of this fact alone would strictly speaking be able to function only by way of a continuous multiplication and enlargement of centralized *ad hoc* interventions, that is to say, the interventions of a state bureaucracy.

This is the crux of the matter. The Left, once again, will foster statism and generalized bureaucratization, not so much by way of the "positive" content of its proposals (though these lay the groundwork), but through the economic dislocation provoked by their implementation and the consequent authoritarian intervention of the State. Abstracting from other *political* possibilities—the engagement of the population itself or even a recapture of control over the situation by the Right—the internal logic of the Left is the logic of bureaucratic centralization—the only conclusion to the illogical situation that this program would tend to initiate.

Finally, it is impossible to neglect the international dimensions that a victory of the French Left would create. When Left politicians stress repeatedly that France is neither Chile nor Portugal, they seem to forget that such a truism can be understood in several ways. It also implies that, on the international level, the consequences of a social and political crisis in France could be completely different from the consequences of a similar crisis in a country considered marginal to the Russians or the Americans. Obviously, the United States and Germany will try to do everything they can between now and the elections to help Giscard, but they cannot do much and they are tangled in their own contradictions and irrationalities. What they would be able to do after March 1978 is another story. If the French economic situation were seriously unstable, they certainly would have considerable tactics at their disposal. It is impossible to evaluate in advance the degree of irrationality that will, for example, come to bear in the final analysis in American politics.

Beyond official discourse, there is the reality of political parties such as they are and especially as they could become in a new situation. It seems useless to dwell in the possible tactics of Right-wing parties; on the warnings of General

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Bigeard ("take to the woods when the crazies come"); on the ultimate attitude of an Army that is more and more professionalized but also profoundly strained by the crisis of contemporary society; or on the neo-fascist elements and, more seriously, the right-wing activist SAC. In all this there is nothing particularly problematic: all these groups seem destined to act true to form. Nor is it useful any longer to speak of the existing "Leftist" groups or "groupuscles," notably Trotskyists, unless it is to recall that they played a deadly role in Portugal (as far as they could) by trying to revive their image of "October 1917" in a rhetorical delirium totally estranged from both the real situation and the interests and problems of the population. If the occasion presented itself, they would play the same role in France.[4]

In contrast, it is necessary to understand two new phenomena of the French political scene: the "evolution" of the Communist Party over the past several years and the character of the new Socialist Party. The first, in particular, raises numerous problems that go far beyond the French Communist Party itself and must be considered at length.

The French Communist Party Today

First, we must demystify the discussion of the "true" or "untrue," "sincere" or "insincere" character of the de-Stalinization of the Communist Party. When the Party "abandoned" the dictatorship of the proletariat, it found both approval of this as a "democratic" move and criticism or condemnation for abandoning Marxism. But obviously the Party has never been a partisan of the *dictatorship of the proletariat:* it has always been a partisan of the *dictatorship of the Party.* It is impossible for the Party to have abandoned what it never in truth pursued. The party wants to indicate that it renounces its aim of exclusive power; this is not without significance. But we must turn to an analysis of the *reality* of the Communist Party (a reality to which its Congress's resolutions tend to have no relation) to see whether such renunciation means something other than a simple propaganda device or a medium-range tactical retreat, and whether it is not just more of the never-ending Stalinist proclamations on the love of democracy and the people.[5] In the fifty or so volumes of Lenin's *Collected Works,* one phrase will remain true: "in *politics only imbeciles believe what others say.*"

This *reality* of the French Communist Party is first and foremost the party itself as an *organization*; and within this organization, the bureaucracy or, more precisely, the *bureaucratic Apparatus.* This Apparatus cannot be identified with the ensemble of individuals who staff it, embody it and make it function at any given moment. By way of these contingent individuals, the Apparatus has its own level of existence, as an ensemble of relations and "rules" that assure its reproduction as a bureaucratic Apparatus (i.e.,

4. One can profitably consult the excellent book by Phil Mailer, *Portugal, the Impossible Revolution?* (London, 1977).

5. It was under the Russian constitution of 1936—"the most democratic in the world"—that Stalin dispatched tens of millions to the concentration camps.

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perpetuation of these relations and "rules" and the continuous reconstitution of its individuals). If the Apparatus is essentially this ensemble of relations and rules, it can only exist and preserve itself by ensuring the uninterrupted renewal of these individuals as individuals who are able to make the Apparatus function in accordance with its "nature" by reproducing and perpetuating these relations and these rules. As in all modern bureaucratic organizations, there is a fundamental structural division between the *formal* relations and the *real* ones. The real relations and rules that govern the existence and functioning of the Communist Party *are not* the party's "statutes." The relation between the rules and the statutes is complex; the latter rarely express the former, and often even camouflage them.

But the bureaucratic Apparatus of the French Communist Party—as of other Communist parties—is not simply a bureaucratic Apparatus such as that of the army, the church, the state or the modern corporation. It is a *politically totalitarian* bureaucratic Apparatus—i.e., dominated by its aim of totalitarian domination over the society by way of State power. This aim is not "external" to the totalitarian Apparatus; it is not an "end" for which the Apparatus will be the "means," any more than the Apparatus is only a "means" capable of service for other "ends." The aim of totalitarian domination of the society is not only the cohesive and dynamic force behind the Apparatus; the aim is also carried along by its mode of being, inscribed in its life and everyday functioning. It simultaneously nourishes and is nourished by the external and internal activities of the organization. That means in particular that even when it is not in power, a totalitarian party—Communist, Nazi or any other kind—already prefigures in its reality a totalitarian society. It *is already* a totalitarian micro-society as much as is possible in the context of a global society that is not yet totalitarian. It already institutes in its bosom the type of social relations and corresponding significations that it tends to impose on society at large once it takes power.

Totalitarian domination over society is the "unlimited" domination of the bureaucratic Apparatus. In other words, the power of the Apparatus is not limited by right or laws: law is whatever the Apparatus decides or does. The rule is that there is no other rule aside from what the Apparatus is in the process of deciding.[6] Nor is the power of the Apparatus limited by any specificity, any peculiarity, any prior and already existing organization of the social matter. For the bureaucratic Apparatus, society is simply infinitely malleable raw material. In particular, it is not limited by any borderline between a "private sphere" and a "public sphere," anymore than by the recognition of other kinds of activity that would in principle escape its power. The goal of homogenization, of the essential pulverization of society and people so as to amalgamate them into the State, itself subjected to the Apparatus, is presented in inverted form within the ideology of the Apparatus as the Identity of the People and "their" State (mediated by the totalitarian

6. "The cadres decide everything," said the late Joseph Vissarionovitch. One could become a "criminal" simply by observing laws which were in force only minutes before one's arrest.

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party). In sum, the power of the Apparatus cannot be limited by the "ideas" which, in society, would be opposed to domination or would tend to circumscribe it. The Apparatus must make its ideology a State ideology and every other ideology a crime against the State.

This description concerns the *ideal tendency* of the Apparatus, the limit that it tends to realize. Strictly speaking, this limit can never be attained. Total power is a pure representation. But besides that, certain factors make the effective reality of totalitarian domination by the Apparatus *necessarily* diverge from its ideal limit. The degree of divergence from the ideal differs in each actual case. For example, Yugoslavia is a mildly totalitarian society, while Maoist China is the closest any country has come to maximum totalitarian power.[7]

In particular, State ideology is not necessarily "total;" its essential aspect, the domain in which it cannot tolerate any conflicting discourse, is the domain of the political, of the goals and the organization of society. That its "natural" tendency is to invade all other domains is clear; but, as is shown by Italian fascism or several Eastern European countries, this tendency can easily remain unfulfilled, provided that one postulate remains unchallenged: "Truth" about society and politics is the prerogative of the Apparatus. Similarly, it can be seen that totalitarianism does not necessarily imply the identification of Knowledge and Power, and even less the invocation of "rational" Knowledge. Hitler did not pretend that he or the Nazi Party knew everything: he pretended that he knew what was necessary for the German people. Even less did he pretend that he knew it through rational reflection; he knew it as a *mission* and explicitly denounced Reason in the name of "land," "blood," etc.[8]

This "unlimited" domination which the totalitarian organization aims to impose on society is already realized in its own bosom in the form of the unlimited domination of the Apparatus—materialized as the unlimited power of the "personified" Upper Echelon of the Apparatus—over the organization. That is the case, whether the totalitarian organization has seized power and therefore forms a sub-society within the existing society, or whether, outside of power, the organization only constitutes a micro-society opposed to the existing society. It is this characteristic—the unlimited domination of the Apparatus and the unlimited power of the Upper Echelon of the Apparatus—that is the distinctive feature of the totalitarian organization, and this is determined by the goal of totalitarian domination over society. But it is precisely this goal that is realized in embryonic form in and by the unlimited power of the Upper Echelon of the Apparatus over the

7. A number of "Left" French intellectuals, with their inimitable and characteristic political sense, enthusiastically raved about Maoist totalitarianism and its culminating moment: the "cultural revolution." They have scarcely changed. Having cheered the Revolution in totalitarianism, today they denounce totalitarianism in the Revolution. The thinking is the same.

8. The *invocation* of Knowledge by power, or the latter's *pretension* to possess or to be Knowledge, i.e., the word-representation "Knowledge" as an ingredient of an *ideology*, must not be confused with Knowledge itself.

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organization and, conversely, it is this embryonic realization of unlimited domination in the organization that is the germ and almost the guarantee of the universal unfolding of the totalitarian goal of the organization, when it seizes power.

The unlimited power of the Upper Echelon of the Apparatus over the organization signifies concretely that power is not essentially subject to written rules—that is, that the "statutes" are simply formal; or rather, that by means of these, the Upper Echelon can always impose its decisions on its opponents. In particular, the Upper Echelon is not really subject to regulations concerning its own appointment, which means that it is *tenured* and that it *perpetuates itself by co-optation*.[9]

All this does not mean that the Upper Echelon is absolute Master, independent of the limits imposed on it by internal and external "reality." The Upper Echelon is master only to the extent that it serves the Apparatus. It exists as a "personified" part of the Apparatus and for the Apparatus; the power of the Upper Echelon is a moment and expression of the power of the Apparatus. To be sure, the relation is not and cannot be instrumental. It is the Apparatus that is the *reality* of the totalitarian organization, but this reality can only concretize itself through individuals, and in particular through those who populate the Upper Echelon. This latter is neither "means" nor "instrument" of the Apparatus; it is part and culmination of the *embodiment* of the Apparatus. Like all embodiment, this one also has its tragic sides. Between the "personified" Upper Echelon and the Apparatus as such, tensions are always possible and can become very important.

This, for example, was one of the meanings of the "cultural revolution" in China. Yet, through these conflicts between the Upper Echelon and the Apparatus, it is still the unity of the two that manifests itself and prevails. Thus, during the cultural revolution, when Mao, supported by a faction of the Chinese Communist Party and the Army, tries to set the population against the dominant faction of the party and on occasion attacks the Apparatus as such, the goal and the result of the operation is to renew and reinforce the domination of the Apparatus over Chinese society, while slightly modifying the relation between it and its personified Upper Echelon—Mao himself. And when Stalin, during the most insane period of his power, sends hundreds of thousands of "devoted cadres" of the party to their deaths, at the same time he has to reaffirm and reinforce the power of the party as such: he proclaims that "the cadres decide everything" and invests each minor local communist despot with the same kind of power with regard to the base and to the population that he himself enjoys. Stalin may destroy three-quarters of

9. In a bureaucratic political apparatus of another type, the Socialist Party, for example, and even more in the Western model of the State or in corporate bureaucracies, the rules that limit the power of the Upper Echelon, like those that regulate its appointment, do not remain *simply* formal. Of course, the character of rules, whether they are "simply formal" or not, is a sociological question, not a legal one. The rules that limit the power of Power are not simply formal as long as there exists sociological *fortune*, in the Weberian sense: namely the effective probability of making the rules prevail against Power.

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the contingent individuals who people the Apparatus. But he can do it only to the extent that he simultaneously preserves and reinforces the Apparatus as such; in fact, this destruction of individuals is what confirms, seals, and carries to its full expression both literally and symbolically the omnipotence of the Appparatus, showing that the latter is quite distinct from and independent of any particular person, and is not subject to any rule of language or logic, nor even to the "historical record."

Moreover, it is clear that the unlimited power of the Upper Echelon does not necessarily take the form of the "personal power" of a single individual. To be sure, the connection between the peaks of modern totalitarianism, in its birth and its consolidation, and the power of a single individual (Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin, Mao, etc.) is far from being contingent and accidental,[10] but neither is it absolutely necessary, as present-day Cambodia demonstrates. In any case, the question of modern totalitarianism's indissoluble link to the power of a single individual has been settled once and for all by history: a Stalin or a Mao may die, yet the Apparatus continues.

Not only are there conflicts between the interests of the Apparatus as such and the politics of any given Upper Echelon, but such conflicts are inevitable and illustrate one of the essential irrationalities of the totalitarian bureaucracy. As with Mao's "great leaps," Stalin's politics several times led the Russian State and bureaucratic party to within a millimeter of wreck and ruin. These politics might appear "gratuitous" to the rational observer, or perhaps such an observer would look for "rational" explanations of another order, which would only be rationalizations. But the Apparatus can only exist as the seat of an absolute power, and this power is necessarily invested in someone. The Apparatus must suffer the consequences of this. Any State power is stupid, and absolute power is absolutely stupid. This will annoy only those who have a functionalist view of history and society. No more than any other form of society, a totalitarian society does not need to be and *cannot* be absolutely functional. If such a society cannot preserve a minimum of functionality, it will collapse once and for all. But between this minimal functionality and total "rationality" (from the point of view of its own conservation), the distance is immense.

This digression was necessary to enable an appreciation of the present nature of the French Communist Party and to furnish points of reference for its possible future evolution. The totalitarian aims of the French Communist Party should not be sought in its discourse (whether to be confirmed or contradicted), but in its reality. This reality remains, without a doubt, that of an organization dominated by an Apparatus and subject to the unlimited power of the Upper Echelon of the Apparatus. Whether the Party proclaims itself a partisan of democracy, of unadulterated anarchism or of Zen Buddhism, its totalitarian goal is inscribed in the structure of its organization and in the relations of domination of the Upper Echelon that are constantly

10. Cf. the penetrating reflections of Claude Lefort, in *Un homme en trop* (Paris, 1976), Chapter III: "L'Egocrate," pp. 57-89.

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reproduced. This totalitarian structure cannot be the bearer of anything but a totalitarian goal for the rest of society—and in this regard, not only is what the Party says of little import, but just as insignificant is what it represents to itself *in petto*. (The Bolshevik Party certainly did not lie, and it did not lie to itself, when it said that it was aiming for the installation of socialism.) The Upper Echelon keeps unlimited power and imposes its "line" in its own way, in its own time.

The "abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat" at the eleventh hour—by simple order of the leadership of the party and after prolonged "democratic" preparation of the last French Communist Party Congress—furnishes an unintentionally comic illustration. The Political Bureau has had a sudden vision, and several hours later, the Congress stands behind it to a man. The process of appointment of leaders remains the same: co-optation by the Upper Echelon, through the nomination of a few new leaders by those already in office. And the entire *effective* party organization continues to be arranged in such a manner that the ensemble of individuals who populate the organization are trained in obedience to the Upper Echelon, thus assuring the latter's maintenance of its power. The so-called "open discussion" inside the party—in the face of a leadership that has everything at its disposal (money, the press, internal bulletins, cadres, specialists, information, etc.), and as long as factions remain prohibited—can have no real meaning and serves only as a safety valve, allowing a release of some internal pressure. The day that factions are allowed, the Communist Party will begin its transformation into a party that is simply bureaucratic, like the Socialist Party. It is still far from that.

Such is the present nature of the French Communist Party. But it is incontrovertible that there has also been, over the course of time, an "evolution"—even if only on the level of manifest discourse. Also undeniable is the importance of considering the true meaning of this, its causes and its dynamic—all the more since this is not an isolated phenomenon ("Eurocommunism"). The question is not academic: it is a question of elucidating as much as possible for the purpose of orienting oneself in the upcoming period the determinants of the party's action.

What is surprising is not the eventual "evolution" of the party, but the *lack* of evolution. The surprise is that the party was able to remain the fossil that it has been for such a long time. In vain does the Apparatus strive, like everything else, to preserve its being; it is implanted in rapidly evolving contemporary French society. How, and by what means, has it been able to maintain, preserve and reproduce itself? Under penalty of dwindling away, a minimum of adaptation to societal change has been indispensable. Even in its most external aspects, this adaptation has not been without problems. It was relatively easy for the Catholic Church to make the priests play ball with the boys in management, and the Church fathers never considered it a sin. It was not quite as easy to invite rock groups, erstwhile representatives of capitalist decadence and corruption, to *l'Humanité* celebrations.

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Whether the totalitarian apparatus can preserve and reproduce itself depends on the possibilities open to it: for assuring sufficient recruitment; for reproducing its internal totalitarian structure; for preserving its goal of accession to power as a realizable goal; for maintaining its ideology.

It is a truism to say that this question is completely different once the totalitarian Apparatus has seized State power. For the Russian or Chinese bureaucracy, the question of its preservation and reproduction coincides with the preservation and reproduction of Russian or Chinese society as a society of exploitation and totalitarian oppression. The State power at their disposal assures them of sufficient recruitment, which is only the numerical extension and the preservation of the privileged and dominant sector. This same State power guarantees the totalitarian structure of the Party and society through an infinity of means, and as a last resort, through material force. The only limits on this power are the struggle of the population against bureaucratic oppression and exploitation, and the profound irrationalities and antinomies inherent in the totalitarian bureaucratic organization. Likewise, in relation to ideology, the situation is different for organizations in and out of power. If a hard, inflexible ideology is indispensable during the bureaucracy's accession to power and the consolidation of its power, then the relationship of the bureaucracy to its ideology becomes more elastic once it is securely in power—as, for example, in Russia after 1956. Curiously, for all the totalitarian disposition of the Russian bureaucracy, ideology seems to have been the main link to reality—at the same time that it became an annoying yoke for the bureaucracy itself. The process of decomposition of bureaucratic ideology, "officially" tamed at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, has made the latter into an empty shell. At the limit, the Russian bureaucracy could almost completely rid itself of the "hard core" elements of Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist ideology, and content itself with a vaguely Marxist progressivism-scientism-rationalism. (This in fact is what is happening, and, after 12 years of football with "Marxism-Leninism," this may also be happening in China.) The actual power at the disposal of the Russian bureaucracy allows for this up to a certain point. This power is in the process of becoming the chief ingredient of its "ideology." To be sure, the long-term effects of the disintegration of Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist ideology are another matter. This question is more significant for totalitarian bureaucratic societies than for Western "democratic" societies: to what extent and for how long can a regime continue in pure and simple cynicism?

The situation is not quite the same for a totalitarian Apparatus in the "Opposition," like the French Communist Party. For bureaucracies in power—as well as for "reformist" bureaucracies which are not excluded from power—the real and imagined interests of individuals act as cement. In the case of "oppositional" bureaucracies, however, these interests cannot link together the members of the bureaucratic organization, nor even most of its cadres. This is accomplished by a combination of ideology and the goal of power as a realizable possibility, into which individuals project themselves

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(and their interests—although that factor is not generally decisive in this instance). "We have ideas both true and just; and, as a function of that, we will hold power" ("we" obviously includes "I").

This ideology, in the case of the various Communist Parties and the French Communist Party in particular, was not exactly or just "Marxism" in its successive versions: Garaudian, Kanapian, etc. Its hard core was formed with reference to two mythic "realities:" to "other places" and to "other times." The "other place" is the "socialism" realized in Russia; the "other time" is both already completed (October 1917, the Party's imaginary "revolutionary past") and still to come. Thus the reactionary character of the French Communist Party's politics passes for a "tactic" and is indefinitely redeemed by the idea that one day the party will finally unveil its "revolutionary" essence—a redemption made all the easier as "revolution" has more and more come to signify "seizure of power."

Thus the Party subsists to a great extent on an anachronism. No matter what it does at any given time, in the representations of its militants and sympathizers it remains vaguely "revolutionary": first, because it had been revolutionary and would be again when circumstances permitted; second, because Russia had realized socialism. The first of these rationalizations—increasingly impossible for younger generations—amounts to a pure act of faith continually contradicted by direct experience. The intrinsic fragility of this rationalization is compensated for by obsessive reference to the other, the mythic "reality," *actual* though "elsewhere," of the construction of "socialism" in Russia (afterwards, in the "peoples' democracies"). In a similar vein, between 1968 and 1975 it was necessary for French Maoists to believe that somewhere over there, fortunately far away, the "revolution" had become a reality; this enabled them to retain their delusions about French reality.

The reference to Russia is evaporating at an accelerating rate. Having resisted for an incredibly long time the rudest blows of reality, the mystification of Russian "socialism" is collapsing. We witness the cumulative effect of the schisms with Tito; the Twentieth Congress; the 1956 events in Poland and Hungary; the break with China; the fall of Krushchev; the invasion of Czechoslovakia; the massive purchases of wheat from the United States and the installation of American-financed Pepsi-Cola plants in Russia to quench the thirst of the "new man;" the spread of the truth about Gulag, "psychiatric" repression, and Eastern European dissidents... It suddenly adds up.

This also means that Russia can no longer appear as the guarantee for the realization of European Communist parties' aim of taking power. The Italian communist bosses say that it would be easier for them to realize socialism in the framework of NATO than within the Warsaw Pact. Elleinstein justifies his support of the strike force by exclaiming at an election rally that "If the Czechs had had the atomic bomb in 1968, the Russians wouldn't have invaded.

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Thus, like the other Eurocommunist parties, the French Communist Party can no longer refer to a "realized model" of the so-called socialism to which it aspires. In vain it amplifies the empty talk about the "French road to socialism," for it is unable to provide either its definition or representation. "Elimination of monopolies," "nationalization," and "planning" appear extremely thin in comparison with the dense mythic reality of the two hundred million Russians, under the guidance of the genius Stalin, singing while building socialism and giving birth to a new type of man. Besides, the question of the relation of such measures to socialism and their impact on people's lives is widely debated, and is increasingly difficult to sweep under the rug. The party is compelled toward a more and more complete blackout of Russia, except when it is forced to differentiate itself from Russia. It cannot speak about China. With difficulty it can speak of its own past, if only to lie about it. The sum of these silences could not fill the void of its actual program, its inability to offer its militants and sympathizers any concretization of what it is supposedly doing. In these conditions, the ideology of the organization tends to turn the organization itself into ideology. The whole Left wants nationalizations, but the French Communist Party wants them "more," "better," Truly:" "better" *because* it is the French Communist Party.

Thus we have a party whose ideology tends to be reduced to the simplest expression—ultimately, to the invocation of its own name: "We are communists, because we call ourselves communists." Aside from that, the eclectic beggar's soup that is the militant's usual fare is enriched with all the products and byproducts of contemporary civilization. The cultural page of *L'Humanité* tends to become as sophisticated as, and even more tolerant than, *Le Monde des livres*; *France Nouvelle* accuses the Trotskyists of enthroning themselves on a "rock of certitudes," while at the same time Elleinstein explains the "Stalinist phenomenon" by way of a Trotskyism for idiots.

Consider the questions raised by the astonishing preservation of the French Communist Party as an organization for thirty years: the maintenance of political-ideological influence on the general population[11] and on wage workers in particular;[12] sufficient recruitment to ensure a small presence everywhere; and constant renewal of its decision-makers and cadres. This preservation does not depend on the Party alone: for thirty years it has been necessary for French society to produce a considerable number of individuals ready to become "militants" and then cadres of the communist trade union (CGT) or the French Communist Party.

This immense problem is coextensive with the post-war history of the country (itself incomprehensible without reference to the Occupation and the pre-war period). First, there is the *inertia* of the institution (party, trade union) as such. This is no tautology. Like a physical body, an institution tends

11. Communist voters have rarely comprised less than 20 percent of the electorate.
12. In industry elections, 40 to 50 percent vote for the communist union.

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to maintain the magnitude and direction of its motion as long as another force does not alter it. At a given moment, for example in 1945, it so happens that, as a result of previous history, the communist trade union, the culture-medium of the Communist Party, is the dominant union among workers and wage earners in general. It also happens that for a long period it has almost no opposition. During the first part of the period—up to 1958 or even 1962—French capitalism does not overcome the anarchy and disorder created by the conflict between modernization and retention of its outdated organizational forms. The CGT, with a majority or nearly so in most industries, successfully plays the dual role of "defender of demands" and co-manager of certain industrial functions, and profits from both. The critiques of the CGT from a revolutionary (or even a "good reformist") viewpoint are of little importance in this context. The CGT has continually obstructed struggles, diverted them from the workers' goals, concluded infamous compromises (certainly the most monstrous being the "Grenelle accords" of 1968), and always subordinated struggles to the party's political line (especially during the "cold war," the Algerian war, and again in 1968). The fact is that all of this has merely provoked splits "from the Left" of individuals and tiny minorities who have been unable to crystallize permanently; or, most frequently, has led to disillusionment, a workers' retreat, or a modification in the type of support they give the CGT ("lesser evil"). Amazingly, this situation changed only marginally after the appearance of the socialist union, the CFDT, which offered an alternative. Inertia: the CGT *is already* the union; thus, it *remains* the union.[13] Certainly, the "labor base" it provides the French Communist Party is the most solid aspect of the party's inheritance.

The situation is analogous on the "political" level. Until 1958, French capitalism is entangled in unresolved problems of modernization. From 1958 to 1968 the modernization is carried out under the aegis of de Gaulle's "personal" power. During this entire period, there is no limit to the decay of French social democracy. The Communist Party passes with impunity from the most sectarian to the most compromising politics—"cold war," then special powers voted to Mollet for the Algerian war—it remains the single "pole of opposition" in a country where, for a century, half the population has voted for the "Left." It has its roots in a French tradition begun in 1789,[14] and also in its partial integration into the management of the system (there are presently 28,000 elected Communists in France, most of them municipal councilmen).

But the evolution and modernization of French society, which accelerated considerably after 1960, makes it increasingly difficult for the French Communist Party to retain its old model. Economic expansion and changes in

13. The same thing happened with the English trade unions and the AFL-CIO in the United States.

14. Jacobinism, anticlerical struggles, "revolutionary" patriotism: the English and American ruling classes never emigrated to Coblenz, were never restored by foreign invasion, never crushed a Commune with Prussian help or collaborated with Hitler.

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the horizon and life style alter the problems and preoccupations of the population; the immiserationism (*miserabilisme*) referred to in party propaganda finds an increasingly faint echo. The invocation of the Russian model is no longer attractive. At the same time and for the same reasons, there are changes in the human material from which the French Communist Party draws its militants and cadres. The primary condition for reproducing the Apparatus as a totalitarian Apparatus is the type of organization, operation, and relations among individuals which are those of the Apparatus and which mold the individuals entering it. But this is not sufficient. On one hand, we have seen that the ideology, which must bind individuals of this totalitarian organization out of power disintegrates; the remaining debris proves increasingly obsolete. On the other hand, society produces fewer and fewer of the type of individual who before was likely to become a "militant" and then a "political cadre." This is a result of the erosion of the classical model of "political militancy" (which, through numerous deformations, has remained the party's model), of "politics" itself as a permanent or essential activity, and of the younger generations' growing rejection of the authoritarian relations necessary to the totalitarian Apparatus. These phenomena were explosively demonstrated in May 1968, and, despite appearances, the consequences of May have weighed heavily in the party's evolution.

The picture is far from simple. On one hand, there is always the social production of a number of individuals who continue to be adapted to and attracted by the authoritarian model (supplementary proof of this is provided by the relative expansion of Trotskyism and Maoism in France since 1968). This, more than anything else, underlies the perpetuation of the Communist Party's Apparatus. But this predisposition is no longer present in the great majority of youth. To that extent, for better or worse, the Apparatus must "adapt": change its phraseology and, as far as possible, its "style;" round off its rough edges; replace the simple *diktat* of earlier times with more complex manipulation; try to attenuate or disguise as much as possible the contradiction between what it pretends to do in relation to the whole society and what it actually does internally in its own organization. It is far from certain that it can fully overcome the consequences of the process thus unleashed.

Finally, as above, the Apparatus can hold together and preserve itself and its motion only through its goal of accession to power and exercise of totalitarian power—provided this goal appears at least minimally realizable. This also means that the social and historical situation must offer some "objective possibility" of realizing the goal of the Apparatus, and that there must be enough individuals to whom this goal appears as realizable.[15]

15. I am speaking of the *effective* goal of the Apparatus given its accession to totalitarian power, not of its successive costumes, which are only camouflage: popular democracy, union of the French people, nationalizations plus democratic management, etc.

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From this viewpoint, the existence of the French Communist Party after it left the government in 1947 has been more than difficult. What are the reasons for the solidity of a totalitarian Apparatus once it is constituted, and for its attractiveness in a society that does not at first glance seem at all destined for a totalitarian future? From 1947 to 1958 or later, the French Communist Party could conceive of accession to power only with explicit or potential Russian military support, despite the endemic crisis of French capitalism. And in fact, this accession to power was only conceivable in the context of a global conflict: so it seemed and always seems, unless the United States accepts Europe's passage into the Russian camp without reacting (and France under the power of a pro-Russian Communist Party would render continental Europe, or at least Germany, indefensible). Also, during the shrillest years of the Cold War (1947-1953), the French Communist Party practically transformed into a detachment of Russian guerrillas, devoted its efforts to suicidal operations justified by the supposed imminence of an international crisis. But the "cold peace" and then the so-called "detente" followed the Cold War. Thus, the Party is forced to an "historic retreat." It sets up camp in society, making occasional efforts to break out of its isolation, taking self-preservation as its sole objective while awaiting better times. But this self-preservation becomes increasingly difficult in a changing society, with an ideology that is slipping away, and a Russian "model" that, especially after 1968, becomes repulsive.

The Apparatus is thus impelled to modify its strategy, in a gradual, painful way from 1968 onward. Basically, analogous conditions led a series of other communist parties, starting with the Italian one, to similar modification of their strategy and "style of work." This is what is called "Eurocommunism," a phenomenon that requires a much more detailed analysis, especially of the possibility of a new schism in international communism. Eurocommunism translates the adaptive effort of the totalitarian Communist Apparatuses in a situation where their accession to exclusive power according to the classical scenarios seems practically impossible and where, because of social change, they can no longer restrict themselves to self-preservation. This leads them to establish a growing distance from Russia and from the international communist monolith; and also to abandon, or to appear to abandon—here the distinction becomes very fine—the monolithic character of their own ideology. This adaptation is shaped by a series of sharp contradictions, especially in the case of the party furthest along the Eurocommunist road, i.e., the Italian Communist Party.

It would be a profound error to approach this strategy as being thoroughly "rational." The whole field of parameters relevant to decision and action cannot be surveyed or controlled. Neither chess, nor poker, nor a war game, politics is subject to the fundamental indeterminancy of the actions and reactions in its situation and of the very instruments one believes to control: this indeterminacy cannot be reduced, as in game theory, to a calculus of probabilities.

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The "rational" thread in French Communist Party politics since 1972 can be understood only as the shift to a strategy of gaining power through an alliance with the socialists (who at the time were considered too weak to block Communist Party hegemony); thereby, among other things, giving the United States enough reassurance to prevent an immediate rupture in international relations. If that rupture could be avoided at the moment of the Left's installation in power, the Stalinists would have enough time (or at least could hope for enough) to strengthen their penetration of the State apparatus and the management of production, gradually breaking down and absorbing the socialists and finally subordinating them (by the added means of an eventual split in the Socialist Party).

But it is not important to know whether the "real" Communist Party strategy, or what is presented as such, was this, that or the other. What is essential is that the development of French political opinion renders such a perspective unrealizable. Having formed a leftist coalition in the expectation of being the main beneficiaries of that operation, the Stalinists discover that they are the losers. Instead of hegemony or at least electoral parity with the Socialist Party (which they hoped would leave them with their extraparliamentary advantage, in view of the solidity of their Apparatus and their hold on the unions), they find themselves lacking parity by a two-to-one margin. The meaning of that is obvious: the more remote the risk of a Communist Party-dominated Left has seemed, the more people have been attracted to the newly allied Left; thus, the *relative* decline of the Communist Party's influence has fed on itself. There is also little doubt about the underlying motives of the voters: they see the Communist Party's totalitarianism more and more clearly, and they reject it. The Stalinists have tried to respond to this situation by a show of de-Stalinization, distancing themselves from Russia and, with much greater discretion, from their own past. But this has not accomplished anything. It is their historic nemesis: the more the Stalinists "liberalize," the more their influence erodes; the more they want to appear "sincere," the less they are believed. Stalin knew that the totalitarian lie must be total or else risk total ineffectiveness. For forgetting this elementary truth, his bungling heirs have paid with a series of troubles and crises. But clearly one cannot be Stalin in just any circumstances. The passage from the totalitarian total lie to the cloying, insinuating mystification and manipulation characteristic of modern bureaucratic societies is still not at all easy for the Apparatus of the Russian Communist Party, which employs the entire State mechanism and Siberian and psychiatric dungeons. It is infinitely more difficult for the French Communist Party Apparatus.

The French Communist Party's response to this situation has thus far amounted to playing two tunes at once. They have plucked the string of "liberalization," "democratization," and coolness toward Russia harder and harder; they hope by this to regain at least part of the ground they have lost to the Socialist Party. But the Communist Party also makes a greater and greater show of intransigence toward the Socialist Party, "hardens" its

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positions, and presents itself as the inflexible defender of the "popular interests." Thus it tries simultaneously to gain the greatest chance of recovering enough influence to counterbalance the Socialist Party, to mark out extra routes to its accession to power in case of electoral victory, and to prepare the least unfavorable place to fall in case of electoral defeat.

These objectives are difficult to reconcile, and—like the Italian Communist Party in very different conditions—the French Communist Party's attempt to adapt proves worse than precarious. Its present politics seem to be the only possible politics for it; they are a trap nonetheless. In fact, there is no "good" solution or "favorable" prospect for it, only less and less unfavorable ones. There is nothing to indicate that a Left electoral victory now would be genuinely desirable to the Upper Echelon of the Communist Party; nor that the representation they would make of it would be "rational."

Participating in the government, the French Communist Party would receive the least useful, most unpopular posts. Its attempts to penetrate the State apparatus and the management of large industry would undoubtedly be fought by the Socialist Party on one level and by the socialist union on another, and would be heavily outweighed by the disadvantages of having to support the politics of "austerity" that would almost inevitably become those of a Left government sooner or later. It remained for the French Communist Party to choose the least unfavorable moment for a split—to retain its appearance of the "defender of the workers" while sabotaging the possibility of "a Left government." Outside the government, the situation would be analogous: the problem would become one of supporting or not supporting it through parliamentary voting. This certainly does not mean that all room for maneuver is closed to the Communist Party, especially if movements for certain demands arise. One can be confident that Marchais and Seguy would be simultaneously in the government, supporting stikes against it, and trying to smother them if they got out of their own control. But it is another question how often they would be able to play this game and how much damage they would suffer. In the present situation, the odds are good that the French Communist Party and the communist union will prefer not to "cut themselves off from their base," rather than follow a slow, uncertain strategy of penetrating the State apparatus and the management of production and the economy.

Thus, for the question raised above concerning the extent to which the Party was capable, in the dramatically changing circumstances of the last 25 years, of maintaining and reproducing itself (not simply as "numerical force" and electorate, but in the form of a totalitarian Apparatus), we have a complex answer—which could be called a Norman or a dialectical answer, depending on whether one belongs to the French or the Chinese cultural tradition. The French Communist Party was able to exist as such, yet was not able to maintain itself completely. That the French Communist Party transformed itself seems indisputable; it will be impelled to transform itself even more in the period to come. But in *what direction?*

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It is transforming itself in the direction of a new and original variation of totalitarian organization. There is no sense in seeing in the evolution of the French Communist Party (or the Italian Communist Party)—as the Trotskyists do—the finally realized return ("predicted" by Trotsky since 1938) to the "social democratic" type of organization, baptized for the occasion the "bureaucratic workers' party." The French Communist Party is not simply a bureaucratic party, like the Socialist Party, the Labor Party, or the German Social Democrats. It does not abandon its essential totalitarian characteristics: the Apparatus thereby still dominates the individuals who fill the organization, and its Upper Echelon enjoys unlimited power. To be sure, it is possible that they might abandon these characteristics one day; if they do, there would always be time to report it.

But the continued domination by the Apparatus and the power of the Upper Echelon goes together with alterations in the relation of the Party to ideology, Russia and international communism, its public attitudes, and, up to a certain point, its own internal functioning. These alterations seem understandable insofar as they seem to be almost imposed on the French Communist Party by the evolution of French society, the types of individuals it produces, the problems which preoccupy the population, as well as the "objective" disintegration of its ideology. But the intelligibility of these alterations is relative. No one could say that had the French Communist Party remained 100 percent Stalinist and pro-Russia, its loss of influence would have been greater. Conversely, once these alterations have taken place and continue, their effects inscribe themselves in reality and begin to become irreversible. It is not certain that the Apparatus can control them and master them as much as it would like.

A new definition is therefore necessary. The French Communist Party is not a "social democratic" party, but it is no longer the totalitarian party of the Stalinist type that it was of late. We are witnessing, as with the Italian and Spanish Communist parties, the emergence of something new: a totalitarian Apparatus which can no longer claim for itself an explicitly totalitarian ideology; an Apparatus that is led gradually to adulterate the totalitarian mode of functioning of the organization it dominates; in short, an Apparatus that must maintain its totalitarian aims with regard to power—aims that seem practically unrealizable in the society in which it lives. The Apparatus can only be shamefacedly totalitarian. To what extent such an organization is historically viable, and for how long, is a question that I have no ambition, for the moment, to answer.

We must reflect longer on the "objective" aspect of this question: what are the chances of totalitarianism in a contemporary "developed" society—or, more precisely, does such a society create some "objective possibility" for a totalitarian evolution?

Contemporary society secretes bureaucracy from all its pores. Neither an appendage of Eastern Europe or of the underdeveloped countries, nor a "product of Marxism," and still less "hardly French," the bureaucracy is—far

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more centrally than the "market"—*the institution* par excellence of modern capitalism. Contemporary society knows no other way of responding to its problems; even more, these problems are posed and defined in such a fashion that the only possible response is a bureaucratic one: "regulation," hierarchy, "competence," division of ever more refined tasks, pseudo-rational expertise. And it can only survive as bureaucratic capitalist society to the extent that it imposes this model everywhere—which also requires that it be accepted and interiorized by individuals. Its supreme victory is realized when this model is accepted, taken up, internalized by those who question and struggle against the established system. This renewal—whose theoretical premises were posed by the "other Marx"—has been realized, in a different manner, by the parties and unions of the Second International as well as by Lenin and Bolshevism.

But bureaucracy does not signify totalitarianism. The bureaucracies of modern societies are, typically, "soft" bureaucracies, not totalitarian bureaucracies. And in fact, what is carried by the "logic" of the modern world —i.e., as much as by the magma of imaginary social significations which fashions it and dominates it as by their instituted and materialized instrumentation—is pseudo-rational bureaucracy, not totalitarianism. This is another example of the limits of all "economic" and "regressive" "explications" of history, which reduce what happens to what was. In vain would an "explication" of totalitarianism be sought in the conjunction of bureaucracy and revolution: neither Hitler nor Mussolini was a revolutionary. In vain, too, would one look to a particularly acute crisis of the established society for an explanation of totalitarianism: most of the time these crises have found other solutions, and Stalin imposed and consolidated his power independently of any crisis.

Monstrous historical *creation*, totalitarianism is indeed rooted in a hundred ways in what precedes it; but also, in a thousand ways, it passes beyond any "logic" or any "causality." It is the outer limit of bureaucracy, inasmuch as the bureaucratic Apparatus realizes in totalitarianism its maximum power, in becoming completely autonomous and taking possession of the totality of social matter. And it is also the total inversion of bureaucracy, inasmuch as this Apparatus tends to detach itself from any "rule" and the pseudo-rational imaginary of bureaucracy transforms itself into pure delirium—a delirium that is all the stronger as it manages to have the cruelest hold on the "real."

I noted above that the evolution of public opinion these last years in France shows that it rejects more and more firmly any totalitarian perspective. It would be correct to conclude that the chances of the Communist Apparatus taking power to realize the totalitarian ambitions inscribed in it are practically zero. Nevertheless, this conclusion cannot be considered absolute. Even the most unbelievable reversals in appearance should not be excluded in this domain. Not in order to "explicate" what may be, but to point out a striking feature of the phenomenon, let us state that the installation of totalitarianism has most often corresponded to what must be called a sudden

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and brutal anthropological mutation, a veritable earth tremor that grows with terrifying speed. An enormous question: what then is this fundamental fragility incorporated in the psycho-political personality of Western man—man formed, since 1776 and 1789 and before that, in the struggle against dogma, the arbitrariness of power, the limitations on liberty and the expressions of opinion, national oppression, and political, economic and social injustice—so that modern society can pour out of itself, in the space of 10 or 15 years (let us say from 1918 to 1933), far beyond any "objective necessity" and by tens of millions, individuals ready to cooperate actively and with enthusiasm in totalitarian undertakings, ready to populate the Fascist, Nazi and Communist parties, to operate immense apparatuses of lying propaganda, to participate on a large scale in the atrocious repression of opposition, or even of simple citizens, and to officiate in gigantic concentration camps?

Are such phenomena from another epoch? But how can we forget the clearest "organizational" aftermath of May 1968? Behold an immense movement that begins and deploys itself under the sign of the struggle against bureaucracy, hierarchy, pseudo-"knowledge," etc. Yet most of those who want to remain active after the retreat of the movement join movements that are explicitly totalitarian (Maoist or Stalinist), or carriers of a totalitarian dynamic (Trotskyist). These young revolutionaries do not *know* anything else, cannot *think* anything else—in spite of what they knew and thought during the days of May—than to submit themselves to a conviction fixed once and for all, embodied in an organization they will obey, year after year, like zombies. And who is to say what they would have been able to do if their organization had been able to accede to power?

It is therefore impossible to develop a more or less complete picture of the totalitarian "chances" of the party Apparatus without always keeping this knowledge in the warmest corner of one's heart: in France, with its ancient civilization and its old critical and democratic tradition, for 50 years, without any police constraint, millions of people have swallowed unflinchingly the monstrosities displayed daily in *l'Humanité*. What is important is not that they are lies, but that they are enormous offences to a minimum of good sense. Over half a century, such voluntary acceptance of delirious Stalinist scenarios by otherwise perfectly "normal" people, such *alienation* (which can only be described as psychiatric, and which, moreover, includes a suspension of both rules and reality, or rather of elementary reason), poses a problem of the first magnitude, as important as the Gulag and the power of Stalin. It is at least as important, if not more so, because we can understand—or believe that we can understand—the unlimited effects of *real* violence and terror more easily than the "voluntary" and "wanton" blindness of Stalinists and Maoists, French or otherwise.

The Socialist Party

Cloudy, strange and indescribable, the remnants of the former Socialist Party, the SFIO, find themselves together with the remnants of the

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Convention for the Republican Institutions, with left-wing Christians, neo-technocrats, the petty and middle bourgeois of progressive good will, Marxist neophytes and others much less innocent. In addition, certain slogans of May 1968 are salvaged, flattened and emptied of their substance—the transformation of life, self-management—and are wed to a technocratic ideology that is both antiquated and dadaist. These scarcely conceal the opportunist conservatism of the first secretary-general, which is successfully passed off as a kind of political opportunism.

The extreme heterogeneity of the current Socialist Party, insufficiently straitjacketed by a slowly growing bureaucratic Apparatus, is for the moment counterbalanced only by the leadership of the irreplaceable Mitterrand. As Clemenceau said, the cemeteries are full of irreplaceable people. Yet, what would the Socialist Party be without Mitterrand? Still, in the longer term, the Socialist Party could only become something solid by connecting with state power. And it is to that end that its leaders and "cadres" aspire.

The post-electoral period will condense this cloudiness—if it does not make it explode. It will not bring a revelation: there is nothing to "reveal" in the present Socialist Party as an organization (and I am not now speaking of its electorate). But it will determine whether the Socialist Party will again rapidly fall into pure and simple social democracy and govern the established system without touching it, or whether it will try to play out the hand of statist neo-reformism.

This neo-reformism would consist of a substantial extension of direct control by the state—by the political and state bureaucracy—over the economy and the other spheres of social activity. It would modify the relationship between actual managerial strata (private capitalists, managerial bureaucracy, upper echelons of the state bureaucracy) and a renovated political and state bureaucracy, to the detriment of the former and the advantage of the latter.

Such a modification, in the abstract, is not at all impossible. The conflict that places these two strata in opposition to each other is relative, not radical. And, just as total bureaucratic capitalism in the East presents important variants (Russia, Hungary, Yugoslavia), fragmented capitalism in the West also presents different forms (the United States, Italy, Sweden, England). Who could think that a new extension of nationalization in England would be impossible or provoke a civil war?

But in France, in the immediate future, this possibility seems abstract. The Socialist Party is not "assimilated," as is the Labor Party, by the bosses and big managerial bureaucracy. In addition, its alliance with the Communist Party constitutes a *casus belli* for the French managerial strata. If the Left carried it to victory in the elections, the Socialist Party could not govern alone—and it could hardly govern with the Communists. Even in the best of times, in which the Socialist Party could have relatively free room to maneuver, its mere accession to power would, in itself, be a strongly destabilizing element in the situation. At any rate, its movements will be

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hampered by Giscard's presidency, the objective situation, its alliance with the French Communist Party and the possible actions and reactions of the population.

Indeed, almost anything can be expected from Mitterrand and Marchais, including a comprehensive implementation of their "program." But is that really possible? Can Mitterrand in 1978 play Mollet of 1956? He would have to contend with the hostile reactions of international capitalism; big, medium and small French bosses; merchants, the political and military right wing, the rivalry and the bidding of the Communist Party; the eventual demands of salaried workers and other sections of the population; his own electorate; the unknown represented by the socialist workers union, and last but not least, the whims and the confusion of his own economic experts.

What can reasonably be foreseen, in the case of an electoral victory of a Socialist-Communist government, is an initial period of disorder, resulting from "spontaneous" reactions of the economy and from the governmental measures themselves, and a succeeding period marked by an "austerity program" and considerable pains. It would not be very interesting to try to predict how, in such conditions, the Socialist Party would be able to maneuver on one hand, the Communist Party on the other, and impossible to foresee what would be their own "organic" evolution. If one cannot exclude at one extreme the possibility of a "Mitterrand experience" of some months within a context of popular passivity, followed by a dissolution of the Chamber and a return to the Right cannot be excluded, one can no longer exclude, at the other extreme, the possibility of an evolution wherein the Stalinists, successful in their infatuation with social protest movements and in provoking a split in the Socialist Party, attempt to seize power for themselves in alliance with the CERES.

Modern capitalist societies find the condition of their functioning, as well as of the recurrent ruptures in this functioning, in the apathy, the depoliticization, and the privatization of the population that they engender. In the political sector of the system, elections constitute a safety valve. They accredit for people the idea that they exercise an influence on the course of events. At the same time, elections offer protection against the extreme aberrations that the political bureaucracy would risk if all sanctions and controls were withdrawn. But this privatization is periodically called into question by the very evolution of capitalist society: by the "incidents" and "accidents" that interrupt the regular process of expansion and bureaucratization. The last 15 years are a new source of examples, in the U.S. as well as in Italy and in France.

The French elections of March 1978 will also probably be such an "accident." They are situated at the intersection of a series of processes that are rooted in the present situation of the established system and its antinomies, but which are not reducible to one and the same chain of "causes." Among these processes, some affect the capitalist world in its entirety: the enormous disturbance of the international economy since 1973;

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the new problems that Western capitalism must confront: inflation and difficulties in reducing unemployment to more "normal" proportions; the awakening of the population to new questions; everyday life, the nature and content of capitalist consumption, ecology, crisis of the organization of work and even the very idea of work itself, the struggle against hierarchy; the crisis of ideologies and traditional norms; and the growing break by women and youth with socially established models. Other processes are more specific to French society: the continuing of subterranean effects of May 1968; the constitution—which, *a priori*, was not at all inevitable—of a socialist party different from the old SFIO, and the evolution of the Communist Party and its relative weight in French political life.

If it came to pass, this "accident" would provoke a rupture in the post-1968 tranquility of French society. More precisely, the foreseeable and familiar character of the possibility of such a rupture removes from the elections the character of "accident;" it makes of them almost a deliberate political act that takes advantage of a given constellation of circumstances. Everything is happening as though the French people were getting ready to set in motion the event that would plunge them into a new and unforeseeable situation and that would order them to do (or to undergo) something unfamiliar.

The aim here is not to describe possible scenarios, but to discern what seems already discoverable and comprehensible in the "objective" elements of the situation and in the evolution of the French Communist and Socialist parties. What has been missing in the preceding pages is the main actor whose actions and reactions will make all the difference: the French population. On this subject, we can do no more at present than to ask a series of questions.

What do some expect, and others fear, from an electoral victory of the Left? How will these hopes and fears be modified as a function of the event? To what extent would such an event make people think "it's happened," and therefore incite them to act in such a way that in effect, something does happen; or else, to what extent would they patiently wait for a socialist-communist government to "resolve problems" and to what extent would they accept the costs? What really is the experience of the population concerning political parties, and how would this be transformed under a socialist-communist government? Correlatively, to what extent could these parties—especially the Communist Party—control the eventual movements? To what degree and under what conditions could such movements pass beyond the frontiers of the leftist electorate and bring onto the stage most of the population? What would be the degree of mobilization and the role of the poorest and most oppressed sectors, particularly the mass of immigrant workers, and to what extent would they find national and "racial" cleavages erased or, on the contrary, aggravated? What about a possible reawakening of the student movement? What about other "unorthodox" movements: youth, women, ecologists, regionalists? Where is the subterranean elaboration of the memories of May 1968? What is the present power and dynamic of the idea of self-management in light of the contradictory effects of its widespread

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diffusion during the past 10 years and of the flattening out that accompanies this diffusion? To what extent, if people began to act, would they be capable of effective self-organization, of foiling the ruses and maneuvers of the organizations of the Right and the Left, of defining shared and universalizable objectives, and of coordinating the activities of their autonomous organs?

All these questions pose themselves conspicuously and it is necessary to give them expression, not in order to draw up a catalogue of possibilities, but to remain alert to what might be hatched from the coming situation. But the very obviousness of these questions shows the limitations of this approach: it can only lead us to combine or to extrapolate what we have more or less known. But what matters is that which goes beyond what we already know: the new, the original, to which the activity of the population in France may give birth within a few months.

This does not mean that we have nothing to think, nothing to say, nothing to want, nothing to do. Absolutely not. We are familiar with and we must speak of the ever-present risk constituted by the existence of the totalitarian Apparatus of the French Communist Party as well as the reinfrocement of this risk by tendencies in the Socialist Party. We know that in case of acute crisis, the Socialist Party will tip to the side of the defense of the established disorder, where the Right will wait for it with open arms. We know that the traditional "leftist" groupuscules will try to infest any movement with their unreal rhetoric and to subject it to their authoritarian organizational schemes.

We also know above all what we want: that men and women organize themselves—in enterprises, administrations, neighborhoods, villages, universities and schools; that they smash the hierarchical and bureaucratic structures of organization and of power; that they shatter the monopoly of information and actively develop the free circulation of information and ideas; that they stop alienating themselves with ideologies that suppress real questions and that they impregnate themselves with the conviction that they alone, and neither ideologues nor "experts," can invent solutions appropriate to their problems; that they reinstate living collectivities; that they leave prostituted "politics" in the gutter where it belongs, and reinvent the real politics, the goal of which is the global institution of society; that they understand that there is no division between the "large" questions and those of their everyday existence, since the problems which torture the humblest housewife—her circumstances, her housing, her children, their school, the neighborhood, the television programs, and the brutalization of her husband at work or his patriarchal attitudes—are only aspects or articulations of the problem of the organization and the life of society; and that they know at last that all they might be able to do, and the most extraordinary transformations that they might be able to bring about, would be more than precarious and stillborn as long as there is a State apparatus that raises itself to confront society as the separate and autonomous master of the functions of centralization, of information and violence.

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THE POLITICS OF OBJECTIVITY: NOTES ON THE U.S. LEFT[1]

by Russell Jacoby

The "one step forward, two steps backward" critique of the left is regularly brought forth. Today, Lenin's title smacks of the past when people walked. The movements of the US left can no longer be encompassed by pre-industrial metaphors. The left does not so much step and backstep as careen and crash; its movements are derived from highspeed turnpikes, traffic jams, and sudden exits. Discussions of prospects and possibilities succumb to the morning traffic bulletins: even when right, they are too late.

The almost irresistable temptation is to cast the movements of the left into a developmental schema, registering a progression—difficult, halting, occasionally stopped and reversed—when there may be none. This is the ghost of evolutionism that haunts Marxism. Rather the form of activity of the left may explode any linear development. In brief, the opacity and intractability of society continuously propels the left into two distinct directions which are perpendicular, as it were, to any advance. This axis is defined by a return to orthodox theory and practice which becomes regression and retreat; and an advance to new theories which becomes fad and tinsel. That the same people slide between these two directions, apparently effortlessly, only confirms that they are related.

The jumps, moves, and shifts of the US left might simply be proof of its acute historical consciousness. The quickening of the historical pace is matched by the left; such is the gist of most commentaries on the left by the left. "In the mid-sixties we learned such and such...in the late sixites such and such...in the seventies..." It is meanspirited not to accept this at face value; and it is impossible to do so. The oscillations of the left have not been translated into a progressive movement. The tempo and swings of the motions have been both too regular and erratic to be explained by transformations of capital. Regular changes in fashion hardly imply a regular refashioning of capital. The left may be less an opponent than a victim of fashion.

If fashion is change without change, the perpetual novelty and discovery is an illusion. Tastes and modes are not identical to the historical dialectic. Progress is not registered from year to year, nor even decade to decade. While the left is not a commodity, the rapid succession of political positions and programs indicates an underlying continuity. An invariant form of activity in the left may precede and dominate any particular revision.

The proposition that a recurring form of activity suppresses the content of the left is fraught with difficulties. It reeks of the sociology of political life;

1. This is an "update" of my "Politics of Subjectivity" essay that appeared in 1971 (*Telos*, 9, 1971), and in slightly different forms in *New Left Review*, 79 (May-June, 1973) and in my book *Social Amnesia: A Critique of Conformist Psychology from Adler to Laing* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975).

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the formal relations gain precedence over the content. The soothing conclusion is that the left is no exception to the rules that bind political life; its movements can be charted and plotted, and its theory and program safely dismissed. Moreover, for the Marxist the question of change and permanency raises the gravest problems. The charge that the left has perpetually revamped its politics seems to betray a gross historical obtuseness; it implies that a premium is placed on retaining false and obsolete positions.

Yet dynamic and static categories are either dialectical or ideological.[2] What endures and changes cannot be identified by a glance; or to identify change with change is to succumb to the trance of everyday life. Conversely, the historical may be what is not changing, what resists change. For this reason, to label a changing politics as historical, and a stable one as ahistorical, may be mislabeling. There is no virtue to inflexibility, but a revolving politics is neither historical nor Marxist; this may be revolving around an axis which is permanently fixed. After a certain time regular changes in politics suggests the regular is governing the change. Nor does the package improve with the ribbon of self-criticism; this too has become a gift item. Those who admit with enthusiasm or reluctance that they were wrong about the counter-culture, the proletariat, the third world, Stalin, guerillas, and so on, impart little confidence that their latest will not also be shortly corrected—especially as they are still wrong. "Dialectics is not identical with development."[3]

The left might be suffering from the commodification of political activity; the market relations ingress. The new promises improvement over the old, and is cheaper than a repair. The left goes shopping, and to conserve energy it recycles 1930 slogans as if there were an imminent shortage. Within the hysteria of change, dwells the monotony of the commodity. The trauma of reification is eased by repetition. Acceleration rather than dissolving reification only polishes the surface. Yet the cynical view that the left has only recapitulated the market relations cannot be accepted without profound reservation. Such cynicism is an aperitif for a tired social criticism; but the flight from cynicism must not forget the object: it must be more afraid of falsifying the left than of satisfying the self-satisfied.

Commodification does not exhaust the phenomenology of the left. In recent years political activity has assumed an almost psychological cast, a bouncing between spurts of activity and utter exhaustion and passivity. This might be considered normal and healthy, as well as the response to the ebb and flow of favorable political circumstances. Yet neither precludes a psychological dimension which is also social. Fits of activity are followed by amnesia and exhaustion; no one can, nor cares to, remember what transpired. A common phenomenon is the dissolution and splitting of countless local projects which find the participants too drained and divided to

2. See T.W. Adorno, "Ueber Statik und Dynamik als soziologische Kategorien," *Aufsätze zur Gesellschaftstheorie und Methodologie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970).

3. M. Horkheimer, "The Authoritarian State," *Telos* 15 (Spring, 1973), p. 12.

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communicate and reflect upon what happened. The participants just depart, mustering their powers to try again later. For an instant the flaws and mistakes of the past seem obvious—too obvious—and in another instant they can no longer be recalled.

This is no isolated process. The strength of the US left—easily romanticized—is in its local projects: health, tenants, community, service, etc. These split, break-up, and reform at accelerating rates; and they leave little accumulated wisdom or experience to show for it. A half-block away and a half-year later no one knows why or what happened. Of course by their very localism they lack a national audience or attention, and consequently, the imperative to write and recall for a wider left. But this is not the whole of it. Political energies ignite and burn themselves out. The elements are dispersed, psychically and geographically.

The erratic and vacillating nature of political activity is compounded by geographic mobility; this is proverbial about the US population in general, and is a way of life for the left. Any recent history or account of the left reads like the travel itinerary it nearly is:[4] endless groups and individuals moving in and out of cities every few years, if not months. This obviously works to fragment a political continuum. Aired regularly on the left is the necessity for a "political commitment" simply to reside in one city for a number of years. The unchecked tendency is to leave when things get boring or tough.

The geographic mobility might seem to provide lines of communication and information that facilitate analysis; the opposite is true. Mythology flourishes. No left meeting is complete without a personal report about a relevant and stunning success in some other city and state; no one knows much about it, even the reporter. A trademark of the US left is the traveller just back from somewhere with a glowing account of left-wing activity and progress—invariably false—which contrasts dramatically with local difficulties.

Obviously this is not an expression of geography; it is a form of activity in an age of mechanical reproduction and passivity. If anything the mythology is denser the closer one approaches. The commodity is opaque before the microscope and telescope. The left flits between bad choices; one wrong position is traded for another. An even keel and long term consistency seem unobtainable. SDS was already plagued by the same ills, spurts of activity that ended in amnesia. By the end of the 1960s, the organizing projects of the mid-60s had already been forgotten.[5] And today the new left itself has passed into oblivion.

The oblivion of the new left has set the stage for the most recent developments, the emergence of the "new" Marxism-Leninism. The apostrophes are necessary here; for the "new" Marxism-Leninism is neither

4. See, for instance, Dan Georgakas, Marvin Surkin, *Detroit, I do Mind Dying. A Study of Urban Revolution* (New York: St. Martins, 1975).

5. On ERAP (Economic Research and Action Projects) see K. Sale, *SDS* (New York: Vintage, 1974), p. 102ff.

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new, Marxist, or Leninist; it is Stalinist, sometimes in spite of itself and sometimes because of itself. The plethora of pre-party and party "new" Marxist-Leninist organizations do not exhaust its broad appeal. The "new" Marxism-Leninism has seeped in everywhere. The politics of subjectivity have been traded in for the politics of objectivity. Where once there was talk of students, culture, and subjectivity—"the personal is political"—now there is the gab of the national question, united fronts, and correct lines—the "science" of Marx-Lenin-Mao Tse-tung Thought.

The cunning of unreason: the new left issued into its opposite, a wholesale reversal of political direction and cant. The anti-authoritarian left spawned the authoritarian left. The new left has been sandblasted away; it is recalled with disdain and condescension. Only incurable romantics remember it. Not this reversal, but its intensity may be unique to the US left. The liberal caricature of dialectics as a mechanical development of the thesis-antithesis proves accurate as the left caricatures development. Or the Marxist proposition that subjectivism and false objectivism are not opposites but complements has been ratified.

It is difficult to gauge the organizational strength of the "new" Marxism-Leninism. If a weakness of the new left was the inability to analyze its practice and theory in a public and sustained manner, the "new" Marxism-Leninism has flooded the limited left market with endless papers, pamphlets and position statements. Insofar as each group has successfully read *What Is To Be Done?* each issues the requisite national newspaper. From the perspective of national publications it appears that the unorganized and disorganized left has ceased to exist.

For just this reason it is often claimed that the strength of the "new" Marxism-Leninism is a pure façade, a publishing stunt; and outside their newspapers and pamphlets the real and local left continues to root and grow. Such claims are impossible to prove or disprove but the secret optimism is insupportable. The Marxist-Leninist groups command the attention and dictate the terms of the debate. If not directly and politically challenged their voice will eventually drown alternatives. A recessive and real left can only become more recessive and less real. Already those just entering the political arena find visible on the revolutionary left only the "new" Marxism-Leninism.

The vagaries and inconsistencies of the new left form the backdrop and impetus for the "new" Marxism-Leninism. Their own critique of the new left while hardly presented, is evident. The new left failed to draw the party conclusion, failed to anchor itself in the working class, failed to promote the correct line, and so on. The half-truths in these charges are converted into myths and dogma. If the new left blindly promoted the self and emotions, the "new" Marxism-Leninism blindly prescribes the antidote of class analysis and correct lines. When they hear the word subjectivity they reach for the "science" of Marxist-Leninist Thought. The fetish of self progresses to the fetish of selflessness.

The same left, and often the same people, who raised the slogan of "smash

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monogamy" now counsel—and command—to join the working class by marrying and raising children. The abstract negation is answered by the abstract affirmation. The endless talk on human relations is transmuted into the endless talk on class relations. The left that once flaunted alternatives in living and sexuality now provides, for instance, "class analyses" of homosexuality. "Homosexuality is an ideology of the petty bourgeoisie," writes one Marxist-Leninist group. "The petty bourgeoisie, which has more leisure time, scramble about in a desperate attempt to find some meaning in their lives. Today people are grasping at all kinds of straws, at exotic religious sects, mysticism, drugs, pornography, promiscuity, sex orgies, Trotskyism [!], etc."[6]

The "New" Marxism-Leninism has corrected all the ills of the new left, or so it claims; but if the new left was innocent of the history of Marxism and revolution, the "new" Marxism-Leninism knows less while fetishizing it. Comintern publications from the 1930s have been exhumed and reprinted. The 1939 edition of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Bolsheviks) (*Short Course*) is again making the rounds. Stalin's complete works, long unavailable, are being imported from India, apparently the only English source.[7] Resolutions from the Sixth Congress of the Comintern (1928) are debated as if they were passed yesterday; the intervening history has been washed away. Imperfect when originally passed, they have not improved in the interim. Of course each Marxist-Leninist group rifles the grabbag of history slightly differently. Some look to the Sixth Congress and denounce each other as social fascists; others look to Dimitroff and the Seventh Congress (1934) and call for united fronts. And some do both.

Again any neat progression is exploded. The flip from the politics of subjectity to objectivity is not simply sequential and chronological; they co-exist and continuously reproduce each other. This suggests, in fact, the inner connection between the two phases. A vapid subjectivism drives adherents to party building and correct lines; and a vapid objectivism drives them to gurus and good vibes. A politics of subjectivity is continuously replenished by an impoverished politics of objectivity.

In public and print innumerable radicals come forth to confess that they realized they were on "power and ego trips"—a fact hard to deny—and that what is really revolutionary is to raise themselves, their children and vegetables —a fact easy to deny. This flood of pronouncements is the current form of the "god-that-failed" literature of the 1940s and 1950s. Ex-radicals, ex-new leftists and ex-communists have all been betrayed by their own creation. While the ex-communists became advertisements for the politics of the "free world," the ex-new leftists hawk the nonpolitical concern and care of the self. It is difficult to see much progress in this, except that the narcissistic conclusion appears more unstable than simple anti-communism. Hence many of those

6. Revolutionary Union, "On Homosexuality" (n.p.,n.d.). The "etc." here is suggestive: what comes after Trotskyism?

7. J. Stalin, *Works*, vol. 1 (Calcutta: Gana-Sahitya Prakash, 1973).

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who disappear into the vortex of rural life and self-liberation eventually reappear.

The emergence of the "new" Marxism-Leninism and the recrudescence of Stalinism are one piece of the same story. Again there are echoes of this world-wide.[8] Paradoxically the very weakness, defeats, and repression of the American Communist Party (CPUSA) has been a contributing factor; because the CPUSA ceased to exist as a viable presence, very few on the left actually experienced or encountered Stalinism in its confident or decayed stages. The historical innocence and naiveté of the US left is not simply obtuseness, but the result of the absence of a generation of Communists. History was severed leaving the left to recapitulate the past. Stalinism is the adult disorder of an infantile left. It is an impression—only an impression—that the most consistently anti-Stalinist are those who by chance of family, friends, or experience have had direct contact with the CPUSA.[9] The minimal impact of organized Stalinism in the 1950s and 1970s has permitted it to recoup and revive.

This is not the whole, nor even the main, reason for the revival of Stalinism; rather it is a precondition. Two major and direct reasons are the Chinese Revolution and the "failure" of the new left; these are connected inversely. The appeal of the Chinese Revolution increased in exact proportion as paralysis overtook the new left. The Chinese possessed what eluded the new left: success. While writing off the new left as an utter failure hardly does justice to the historical reality, this common and almost visceral judgement intensified the attractiveness of the Chinese Revolution. Moreover, and this is decisive, by some quirk in the Marxist *Weltgeist* the Chinese defended the honor and teachings of Stalin against the Russian "revisionists." The affection and enthusiasm of the left for the Chinese defense developed into an affection and enthusiasm for Stalin.

Of course there are no accidents. The Chinese do defend Stalin, that is, Stalin but not his "serious errors." "While defending Stalin, we do not defend his mistakes... In the late twenties, the thirties, and the early and middle forties, the Chinese Marxist-Leninists...resisted the influence of Stalin's mistakes."[10] Obviously the mistakes span the entire revolution, as indeed they do. But any of the niceties of the Chinese defense have been all but lost by the US left. It cannot be accepted, no matter who advances it, that there is an unbroken continuity between Stalin and Mao. The Chinese Revolution, both before 1949 and after, was a revolution contra Stalin.[11] Stalin, Mao has

8. For a discussion of Germany see Götz Eisenberg, Wolfgang Thief, *Fluchtversuche: Ueber Genesis, Verlauf und schlechte Aufhebung der antiautoritären Bewegung* (Giessen: Focus Verlag, 1975).

9. This is what could be called a "necessary but not a sufficient cause." That is, it is evident that many of the "new" Stalinists emerged out of, and never have broken with, the "old" Stalinism.

10. "On the Question of Stalin," in W. Griffith, *Sino-Soviet Rift* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 1969), p. 421.

11. See my discussion in *Stalin, Marxism-Leninism and the Left* (Somerville, Mass: New England Free Press, 1976). Cf. Fred Halliday, "Marxist Analyses of China," *New Left Review*,

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stated, "opposed our revolution and our seizure of power."[12]

This whole question cannot be discussed here, but it can at least be noted that the recent translation of the "unofficial" writings of Mao are more evidence of the enormous hostility and divergence between the Russian and Chinese revolutionary paths. These writings contain many emphatic critiques of Stalin and the Soviet Union.[13] And yet the Chinese do defend Stalin, and this cannot be put down simply as a ploy. The reasons for this are grounded in the complex net of events around 1956. Moreover the recent internal and foreign policy only render more enigmatic the exact nature of the Chinese Revolution. Again none of this can be explored here. The point, however, is that the convoluted relation between Maoism and Stalinism has been systematically avoided by most parts of the left, and the Chinese defense of Stalin accepted without a quibble.

Stalin, annointed by the Chinese Revolution and blessed by the failure of the anti-Stalinist new left, returns to strike fear in the heart of revisionists. "I used to think of Joseph Stalin as a tyrant and butcher who jailed and killed millions, betrayed the Russian revolution, sold out liberation struggles..." begins the introduction to a new edition of Stalin's works published by an established firm. But, continues Bruce Franklin, "to about a billion people today, Stalin is the opposite of what we in the capitalist world have been programmed to believe..."[14] Franklin has joined that billion, along with some others.

Martin Nicolaus recommends Stalin in his introduction to this translation of the *Grundrisse,*[15] and has since gone on to battle for Stalin's honor. According to Nicolaus, the "restoration of capitalism in the USSR" was due to the unexpected discovery that Stalin was mortal. "For as long as Stalin himself was alive, the newly engendered bourgeois forces in Soviet society...dared not take a decisive step...let them take one step out of line and they were

100 (November-January, 1976-77) and Harry Magdoff, "China: Contrasts with the USSR," *Monthly Review* (July-August, 1975).

12. *Miscellany of Mao Tse-tung Thought 1949-1968* (Joint Publications Research Service, 1974), p. 388.

13. This collection or "Miscellany" is identified as "selected items from two Chinese language volumes, *Mao Tse-tung Ssu-hsiang Wan-sue* (Long Live Mao Tse-tung Thought), totalling 996 pages, published in 1967 and 1969, with no other publication information or attribution." Part of the Chinese introduction states "these publications are offered for internal study only and are not to be quoted publicly." A selection of these texts, entitled *A Critique of Soviet Economics,* is forthcoming from *Monthly Review Press.* Of particular interest are the articles "Reading Notes on the Soviet Union's *Political Economics,*" "Speech on the Book 'Economic Problems of Socialism' " and "Critique of Stalin's 'Economic Problems of Socialism in the Soviet Union'." This last begins: "This book by Stalin has not a word on the superstructure from the beginning to end. It never touches upon man. We read of things but not man...The viewpoint of Stalin's last letter is completely wrong. His basic error is his distrust of the people...Basically Stalin failed to chart the way from collective ownership to ownership by all the people...Without a communist movement it is impossible to attain communism" (p. 191-2).

14. Bruce Franklin, ed., *The Essential Stalin* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1972), p. 1. See the review by Paul Breines in *Telos,* 15 (Spring, 1973).

15. Martin Nicolaus, "Forward" Marx, *Grundrisse* (Penguin, 1973), p. 43. See the discussion of this Forward in M. Postone, H. Reinicke "On Nicolaus' Introduction," J. Keane, B. Singer "On Conceptual Anthropology," *Telos,* 22 (Winter 1974-75).

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done for...There was only one man then and there, in the leadership, who had the power to save the situation. And that man, Stalin himself, died..."[16] Nicolaus since has attacked other Marxist-Leninist interpretations of Russia as disrespectful of Stalin's achievements. "This basic approach is very near in spirit and method to the Trotskyist views of Soviet socialism, much as it pays lip-service to Stalin."[17]

Such pronouncements and citations are not oddities and rarities of a discontinued line of left-wing merchandise; they represent real tendencies of the US left. The lure of success and the stench of failure inspires the leap into Marxism-Leninism. Nothing failed like the new left and nothing succeeds like Marxism-Leninism: so goes the reasoning. Marxism-Leninism can claim the Russian, Chinese and Vietnamese Revolutions, as well as the working class. The new left can only claim some sissy students and pre-scientific intellectuals.

The peculiar and American mixture of a horse sense for success and down-home religion is hard to miss. "In 1965 before I became a Communist," Bruce Franklin tells us with the terror of a sinner. The left has always been bewitched by success and sought to tap its powers. In the final days of SDS the call for success and strength was sounded. "What we have to communicate to people is our strength, and to show people our strength we have to show them the strength of fighting on the side of the worldwide movement... You join the movement because you want to be part of the worldwide struggle that's obviously winning..."[18] The point, of course, is not to preach failure and defeat; but the fetish of success contains a businessman's logic and counter-logic. Bank on the winners and cash in the chips when losing. Forgotten is that defeat is part of the past, and the future.

The "new" Marxism-Leninism cannot be cleaved from the general return to the "classic" elements of Marxism—the state, political economy, class analysis—visible in much recent theoretical work. This is not guilt by association. If both are responses to the demise of the new left, and the inadequacy of subjective politics, each can be evaluated separately. The general theoretical shift can be illustrated by the writings associated with

16. Martin Nicolaus, *Restoration of Capitalism in the USSR* (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1975), p. 54-7.

17. Martin Nicolaus, "Critique of Red Papers 7: Metaphysics cannot defeat Revisionism," *Class Struggle* (Summer, 1975). The end of this is perhaps predictable: Nicolaus has been "purged" from his own group for not being up to snuff on Stalin and other questions. "The October League has purged a revisionist and opportunist from its ranks...Martin Nicolaus, a former member of the OL Central Committee, has been expelled following a long and successful struggle against his right-opportunist line...Nicolaus, like all revisionists, also slandered Stalin for his suppression of the bourgeoisie within the party...While he praised Stalin to the skies one minute, claiming him to be a genius and the only man who could save socialism, Nicolaus turned around the next minute and repeated the bourgeoisie's lies about Stalin 'the tyrant'...This revisionist lover of the liberal bourgeoisie and revisionists has been purged from the ranks of the Marxist-Leninists. The Marxist-Leninists have been greatly strengthened by this action...Long live Marxism-Leninism-Mao-Tse-tung Thought! Death to Revisionism!" "Martin Nicolaus Expelled from OL," *The Call*, November 29, 1976.

18. Cited in K. Sale, *SDS*, p. 596.

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Monthly Review. Baran and Sweezy's *Monopoly Capital* (1966) can be characterized as a new left-third world perspective. The working class as a revolutionary class was given little notice, and a critical concept of "surplus" was laid over the political-economic concept of surplus value. The late Harry Braverman's *Labor and Monopoly Capital* (1974) represents a lucid and eloquent return to the working class as a homogenous formation; and Braverman parts from his friend Sweezy's most revisionist concept of surplus.[19]

Yet the return to the "classic" elements of Marxism does intersect with the "new" Marxism-Leninism. The reaction to the subjective politics of the new left risks a "new" theoretical objectivism as well as a "new" Marxism-Leninism. The risk is hardly reason to shun the return and rethinking of the "classic questions;" on the contrary, it requires intransigence before new forms of reification. Nor is the danger of no importance; desiccated and formalized Marxism is the past, and could be the future. If some theoretical work can be portrayed sympathetically as a revival of "classic" Marxism, others can be characterized unsympathetically as an intellectual rout in the face of the offensive of late capitalism. Retrenchment is taking place along the Maginot Line of Marxism. General Althusser might not see it that way; but the project of bleaching Marxism of its subjectivity, humanism and history yields only colorless concepts.[20] The glitter of "over-determination," if it does not wash-out, dresses-up but does not redress the loss. The signal here is "science." While few deny that Marxism is a science, little distinguishes the revived Stalinism more than its fetish of science. That Marxism is a science is repeated endlessly and compulsively; the hope is to awe the heathen.

Marxism is presented as a science unsullied by subjectivity. This is the inner connection between the "new" Marxism-Leninism and the French structuralist Marxism. Descartes has never been put to rest. It is to be recalled that Lukács' critique of Bukharin's technological Marxism turned on his "use of 'science' (in the French sense) as a model."[21] Marx too disassociated himself from the fetish of "scientific" socialism. Responding to Bakunin's charge,[22] he clarified that "scientific socialism" was meant "only in contradiction to utopian socialism, which encouraged new phantasies in the people, rather

19. See my review, *Telos*, 29 (Fall, 1976).

20. It has been left to the Althusserians to accuse Stalin of humanism. "Stalin fell into both economism and humanism..." (p. 14) Grahame Locke, Introduction to L. Althusser, *Essays in Self-Criticism* (London: NLB, 1976). Or mull on this bit of Althusserian logic: "The trials and purges played a role *determined in the last instance by the class struggle inside the USSR*, even if in practice their victims were the 'wrong' ones" (p. 15). That the "victims" were "in practice" the "wrong" ones is, of course, unfortunate.

21. G. Lukács, Review of Bukharin, *Historical Materialism*, in *Political Writings 1919-1929* (London: NLB, 1972), p. 136.

22. Bakunin wrote: "The expressions 'learned socialist,' 'scientific socialism'," ect. which continuously appear in the speeches and writings of the followers of Lasalle and Marx, prove that the pseudo-People's State will be nothing but a despotic control of the populace by a new and not at all numerous aristocracy of real and pseudoscientists," "Statism and Anarchy," in *Bakunin on Anarchy*, ed. S. Dolgoff (New York: Vintage, 1972), p. 331.

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than confining its science to the knowledge of the social movements made by the people themselves."[23] He refered to his critique of Proudhon. "Science for him [Proudhon] reduces itself to the slender proportions of a scientific formula; he is the man in search of formulas."[24]

The development of Weatherman, later the Weather Underground Organization (WUO) forms a convex mirror of general tendencies in the US left—an intense, focused, and sometimes reverse image of the left. For this reason alone it merits attention. In large part since their inception, the Weather Underground has completed a full metamorphosis; they now advance positions based on the "science" of Marxism-Leninism that sound very much like those they originally denounced. Again their own evolution can be interpreted as a progressive development, a renunciation of inadequate politics faced with a fluid capitalism; and again, another dynamic persists which damns change to monotonous repetition.

Here their development can only be sketched. To be recalled is that in the declining days of SDS one faction coalesced around the "Weatherman" statement, a name derived from a Bob Dylan song. The other faction was Progressive Labor; their beginnings dated from the early 60s, and originally their membership had been purged or quit the CPUSA because of Maoism. By 1969 Progressive Labor represented atavistic Marxism. In the name of doctrinal purity anything that infused the new left, as well as much that infused the world, was denounced as deviations from Marxism-Leninism: Black Nationalism, Cuba, North Vietnam, youth culture, and so on. Their claim to intelligence can be measured by their notorious charge that Herbert Marcuse was a CIA agent.[25]

In this situation, Weatherman appeared as the legitimate successor to the new left; and they possessed the actual support or good will of much of the left. Their statement was marked by at least two statements which were heretical to Progressive Labor: a receptivity to Black Nationalism and a youth movement. In their militant and militaristic language "Young people will be part of the International Liberation Army."[26] That they saw themselves as forming a Red Army, in which the entire working class, and indeed all of white America, would be subordinated, or ignored, only begins to suggest their flaws. Weatherman can be charged with many ills but not with a lack of dedication and courage. Some time after the split in SDS, Weatherman went underground, declaring a state of war against the US. "Armed struggle starts when someone starts it. International revolutionary war is reality, and to debate about the "correct time and conditions" to begin to fight, or about a phase of work necessary to prepare people for the

23. K. Marx, "Konspekt von Bakunins 'Staatlichkeit und Anarchie'," in Marx, Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 18 (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1969), p. 635-6.
24. K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York: International Press, 1963), p. 126.
25. "Marcuse: Cop-out or Cop?" *Progressive Labor*, February, 1969.
26. "You don't need a Weatherman to know which way the wind is blowing," in *Weatherman*, ed. H. Jacobs (New York: Ramparts Press, 1970), p. 73.

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revolution, is reactionary."[27] The first statement from the Weather Underground called for the welding together of youth culture, outlaws and guns. "Freaks are revolutionaries and revolutionaries are freaks. If you want to find us, this is where we are. In every tribe, commune, dormitory, farmhouse barracks, and townhouse where kids are making love, smoking dope and loading guns..."[28] Within weeks the first explosion by the Weather Underground detonated at the New York City Police Department. That was June 1970.

The next years were the "heroic period" of the Weather Underground; it is dotted by bombings and statements. This phase culminated in a book-length political report, entitled *Prairie Fire* (1974), which sought to sum up past experiences and look to the future. It contained a number of serious self-criticisms and re-evaluations of Weatherman's politics. "We were correct in our decision to prepare and build the armed struggle...We were wrong in failing to realize the possibility and strategic necessity of involving masses of people in anti-imperialist action and organization. We fixed our vision only on white people's complicity with empire...We let go of our identification with the people...We made the mistake of deemphasizing the importance of mass work..."[29] Now the WUO called for a broad based anti-imperialist movement, and their book closed with the command "go to the people." No activity was excluded: teachers, artists, health workers, and so on, could all do their share.[30]

The political development of the WUO did not stop with *Prairie Fire*; in fact it only intensified. And this is the point; positions have been adopted, criticized and junked with dizzying speed. Each inadequate position has yielded another. In 1975 the WUO began issuing an underground periodical, *Osawatamie*. The first number contained a statement, signed by the Central Committee of the WUO, that called for the study of Marxism-Leninism.[31] The second announced that "the WUO is a cadre organization and we support other cadre formations around correct politics and good work as a step towards developing a revolutionary communist party."[32]

The third issue began a new series of self-criticisms. It stated emphatically that the WUO suffered from confusion and chaos that was now resolved. "We discovered through our own experience what revolutionaries all over the world have found—that Marxism-Leninism is the science of revolution..." And barely one year after the appearance of *Prairie Fire*, it is criticized for ignoring the working class. "...We have also historically downplayed the role and potential of the US working class...assigning the working class a permanent secondary front in the struggle. Perhaps worst of all, we have

27. "Everyone talks about the Weather..." *Ibid.*, p. 446.
28. "Communique No. 1 from the Weatherman Underground," *Ibid.*, p. 510.
29. *Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism.* Political Statement of the Weather Underground (n.p., 1974), p. 10-11.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
31. *Osawatamie: Weather Underground Organization*, No. 1 (Spring, 1975), p. 4-5.
32. *Osawatamie*, No. 2 (Summer, 1975), p. 4.

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viewed with suspicion any emphasis on class struggle, seeing it as a potential downplaying of the great uprisings of the Third World..."[33]

This was hardly the end of it. The following issue contained a criticism of the SLA, a California underground outfit whose claim to fame, among other things, was the assassination of a black administrator and the kidnapping of Patty Hearst. They were charged with succumbing to the military error. "We once held this position...Our goal is revolution, not armed struggle...Revolution is the work of the masses..."[34] Moreover a position was taken on the women's movement, adequately summarized in its title, "The Women's Question is a Class Question."

A more recent issue includes self-criticisms of positions adopted *after Prairie Fire*. It accuses *Prairie Fire* of "opportunist errors." "*Prairie Fire* had a wrong view of the role and revolutionary potential of the working class and it failed to argue for a revolutionary communist party." And after *Prairie Fire* "we have made opportunist errors: 1) abandoning revolutionary anti-imperialism; 2) submerging the national question into the class question; ...3) downplaying the struggle against the special oppression of women; ... 4) downplaying the essential role of revolutionary theory and communist organization..." If *Prairie Fire* was guilty of "bowing to spontaneity," *Osawatamie* avoided the struggle for a political line and party. "...We used the emphasis on mass work to defer the struggle over leading political line and communist organization." "The struggle over political line is the heart of the process of forging communist organizations." And Weatherman, in 1976, ends with the injunction to "develop a Marxist-Leninist party of the proletariat, with a correct political line and strategy..."[35]

Perhaps WUO no longer merits even this abridged attention; but their erosion into a Marxist-Leninist grouplet shows the same strains and tendencies as the wider left. Their initial opposition to the decayed Maoist orthodoxy of Progressive Labor dissipated; and they now mimic the dogma they once denounced. Each position has proved impossible to sustain for long. Like the wider left, they have gone through the motions, but there has been little movement; they have shifted but not advanced. In the process they have left behind a train of wreckage, burnt-out and used-up souls.

Is the "new" Marxism-Leninism a passing phenomenon? Arguments can be adduced to show this. The difficulty of keeping up with, much less justifying,

33. "Our Class Stand," *Osawatamie*, No. 3 (Autumn, 1975), p. 4-5.

34. "Armed Struggle and the SLA," *Osawatamie*, No. 4 (Winter, 1975-76), p. 30-1.

35. "Anti-Imperialism versus Opportunism: Self-Criticism," *Osawatamie*, II, No. 2 (June-July, 1976), p. 16-20. It would seem that the Weather Underground has boxed itself into an impossible situation: an underground group calling for, and trying to establish, an above ground Marxist-Leninist party. If the latest reports are to be believed, this has in fact caused the first important split in the WUO; one faction is arguing that they should "surface," run the risks of trials, so as to reform as an above ground political party. The other faction charges that this is a sell-out of anti-imperialism, a replacement of armed struggle with "opportunist work-place organizing" and "unprincipled participation in economic struggle." See "Weather Underground splits on whether to be Overground," *Seven Days*, February 28, 1977.

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Chinese developments is cutting into its ranks; the wellspring of enthusiasm for the Chinese Revolution is slowly leaching away. Conversely, Marxism-Leninism without China might possibly accrue to the CPUSA. Visible is an increasing nostalgia for the CPUSA of the 1930s and 1940s. Once the logic of success is scaled down, the CPUSA appears in better light; after all they survived, a victory which few can claim. In a period of fluctuating politics, the very existence and persistence of the CPUSA can be interpreted as strength and commitment.

Korsch, Gramsci and others have noted that a dogmatic and scientistic Marxism has wide appeal in a time of defeats and retreats. In this situation a determinist form of Marxism preserves a will and theory of social revolution which under different conditions may reinvigorate itself. From this perspective, the politics of objectivity become the temporary shelter following the failure of the new left. "When you don't have the initiative in the struggle and the struggle itself comes eventually to be identified with a series of defeats, mechanical determinism becomes a tremendous force of moral resistance, of cohesion and of patient and obstinate perseverance. 'I have been defeated for the moment, but the tide of history is working for me in the long term'."[36] Yet the danger here, as Gramsci goes on to say, is fatalism and passivity.

To interpret the "new" Marxism-Leninism as a phase implies a progressive development; this has been questioned here. Neo-Stalinism, if two steps backward, is placed on a one way path to revolution. Yet this path may be a traffic circle. In different terms, the analysis of the left development as phases may be obsolete. Phases too may be a phase. They belong to a period when a living tradition bound the left, when people walked and talked. Today decades seem to disappear and reappear randomly. The only "coupure" is in the left itself. Fashion stalks and perhaps leads its movements. The existing motion is as much lateral as forward and backward. The difficulty of surveying the US left is not only subjective. Opposite trends co-exist, continually reproducing each other. Refugees from the politics of subjectivity embark for "scientific" Marxism where they memorize the language of Stalin; even their accents are erased. Drop-outs (and the purged) retreat into silence, self-liberation or gurus. The amount of cross traffic belies any forward motion.

This is not an argument for hopelessness; rather the point is to reconceptualize the movement of the left in the recent past. Marxism is characterized by an acute historical consciousness; but this consciousness is always tempted to register historical advances. It is always prone to pronounce that we have entered a new period, era, stage. We are moving towards a "new culture" or the final strike. Imperialism was dubbed the "highest" state of capitalism. Fascism was considered "the extreme stages of

36. A. Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks,* ed. and trans. by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey N. Smith (New York: International Publ., 1971), p. 336.

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capitalism in decay." Post-World War II capitalism is "late"—but never late enough.

The antipodes of subjectivism and objectivism are obviously not the whole story; they inform but hardly exhaust the whole. The appeal of electoral and left liberal politics increases as the revolutionary left ossifies; this may be the choice of many from the "generation of the sixties" who are too commonsensical to buy Mao plus Stalin or gurus and mystics. A former figure of SDS (Tom Hayden) made a very respectable showing as a candidate for US Senate, and is presently forming a left liberal organization. The fate of other leaders identified once with SDS show the poverty of the alternatives: Weather Underground (Bernadine Dohrn); Stalinism (Mike Klonsky, Carl Davidson); mysticism (Rennie Davis); self "liberation" (Paul Potter); electoral politics (Tom Hayden).

None of the other groups or forces can neatly be inserted into this analysis; but nearly all show the same strains and tensions. Here can be mentioned: 1) women's movement; 2) black and ethnic groups; 3) non-Marxist-Leninist formations. Except for the Trotskyists and anarchists, each has tended to produce a "new" Marxist-Leninist faction.[37] Often these are autonomous developments, as well as promoted by the existing "new" Marxist-Leninist parties.

It is easy to denounce the fateful options of bad subjectivity and bad objectivity; it is more difficult to pick one's way through the wilderness. Yet it is clear enough that the blank alternatives are continuously tossed up and hypnotize the left. The dessicated Marxism of the "new" Marxism-Leninism is answered by the flash of "radical" psychology, and vice versa. In the left-wing mall, antique shops are built adjoining novelty outlets. The "science" of the "new" Marxism-Leninism and the science fiction of radical subjectivity complete, promising shortcuts for an impatient left.

Depending on one's vantage point, the academic milieu is either highly visible or invisible. In any case, compared to ten years ago interest in Marxism has undergone a phenomenal growth. Nearly every discipline has a journal and group, formal or informal, dedicated to resuscitating Marxism and a radical tradition. This is one of the most promising developments, though how well it will be able to maintain itself, much less spill out of the universities, is an open question. The "new" social history, feminist studies, Marxist literary studies and "radical" sociology, in particular, are flourishing enterprises. The shadow here is that they will become real enterprises, academic enclaves, replete with status, jobs, and journals.

Yet the danger of cooptation is the least of it, and is often overstated. Old fashioned repression is quicker, cleaner and cheaper. Lacking an active student population, there is little check on the *gleichschaltung* of the universities. The vehicle is both economic and political; for this reason the

37. See Adolf Reed, Jr., "Scientistic Socialism: Notes on the new Afro-American Magic Marxism," *Endarch*, I No. 1 (Fall, 1974), p. 21ff.

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explosion of courses, publications and interest in Marxism may prove to be a bubble. The audience and participants are concentrated in the younger faculty and graduate students. Precious few of these have secure jobs. Moreover the expansion of higher education has come to a dead halt. The relation between political repression and economic retrenchment is inextricable; but together they are taking a deadly toll on the left. Political repression is not legalized as in West Germany; but the vagaries of the "free market," with some pushes and shoves, may prove to be as effective. It always has in the past. The process is slow but unmistakable.

Here also the temptation must be resisted to pass some global judgement about the US left. The situation is too complex; moreover the major tendencies are grounded in a situation that is inherently unstable. This precludes evaluating the future. Again this is hardly a virtue; it means that reflection and criticism always lag behind. There is surely no turning back; too much has transpired since the rise and fall of the new left. There have been victories, and no single overwhelming defeat. Only American society is proving to be more intractable and pliable than the left itself. This is nothing new. Sombart in 1906 already asked the decisive question: Why is there no socialism in the US?[38] And today this question can be further refined, and posed more modestly: Why is there no socialist movement in the US?

The immediate danger to the left is not its disappearance but its dissipation and dispersal; the left is threatened by fragmentation. As the coherence, and even the intelligence of the revolutionary left corrodes away, nearly any other political option appears more engaging. Reform and electoral politics fatten as the revolutionary left sickens. The left has been (momentarily?) stifled by the grim, grey, and sober realities of bourgeois society. The "long march through the institutions" has turned out to be a long search for a job. The advances have been fads, the retrenchments flights. Between the new "god that failed" literature and the god-that-failed there is little choice. Over fifteen years ago, in 1960, C. Wright Mills closed his prescient "Letter to the New Left" with the words: "We are beginning to move again."[39] Today this can no longer be affirmed.

38. Werner Sombart, *Warum gibt es in den Vereinigten Staaten keinen Sozialismus?* (Darmstadt, 1969).

39. C. Wright Mills, "Letter to the New Left," *New Left Review* 5 (September-October, 1960). Reprinted in C. Wright Mills, *Power, Politics and People*, ed. I. L. Horowitz (New York: Ballantine Books, n.d.).

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IMPERIALISM, MONOPOLIES AND INFLATION*

by Antonio Carlo

Inflation and Imperialism

The historical problem of inflation has generated a vast body of economic literature concerning its causes and possible cures. The importance of the topic and the abundance of vulgar mystifications of it necessitate its reformulation in a manner reasserting the general thesis to the effect that "modern" inflation is a result of the capitalist system in its monopoly stage (imperialism).[1]

Obviously, inflation is almost as old as money and antedates capitalism by a few millenia, but its causes were profoundly different in precapitalist epochs. In the late Roman Empire, inflation was due to the debasement of the metal used to make coins;[2] and in the epoch following the discovery of America, money lost value because of the massive influx into Europe of great quantities of gold. As a result, gold became so relatively cheap a commodity that the loss of value of monetary gold affected money itself.[3]

Things changed in the nineteenth century with the increased circulation of paper tender resulting from capitalist development. The problem of inflation in relation to paper money had to be re-examined. Gold lost the importance it earlier had and price competition among capitalists tended to make prices stable or reduce them. With the discovery of new technologies that lowered production costs of commodities, price competition insured that, in the long run, these production costs translated into lower prices.[4]

Things changed, however, with the depression at the end of the last century. Around 1890, capitalism emerged from the crisis and entered its monopoly stage characterized by the elimination, if not of competition *tout court,* at least of price competition.[5] At that point, prices were set by

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1. See Antonio Carlo, *Il Capitalismo Impianificabile* (Rome, 1976), p. 83, note 100, for bibliographical references to non-Marxist authors holding a similar thesis. See also S.J. Dorofeev in *Il Capitalismo Italiano e l'Economia Internazionale* (Rome, 1970), Vol. II, p. 8 et. seq.; D.F. Dowd, "Stagflation and the Political Economy of Decadent Monopoly Capitalism" in *Monthly Review*, Vol. 28, N. 5, Oct., 1976.

2. See S.I. Kovaliov, *Storia di Roma* (Rome, 1965) 4th ed., pp. 701-2.

3. This is well-known. See, P. Villar, *Oro e Moneta nella Storia* (Bari, 1971), p. 97 and p. 131.

4. In this regard see Karl Marx, *Capital* (New York, 1967), Vol. III, p. 211. This would be, according to Marx one of the times in which the (controversial) law of the falling rate of profits applies.

5. Price competition here refers to 19th century competition with the downward tendency of prices. A different, and opposite, type of price competition exists today with an upward tendency. Thus, when a group of enterprises controlling a productive sector raises the cartel price of their own products, the other oligopolists who buy that product ultimately recover the losses suffered by raising the price of their own product. This was the case in the petroleum crisis: the steeply mounting price of oil pushed upwards the prices of manufactured goods. See Antonio Carlo, "The Oil Crisis and the Iron Law of Underdevelopment," *Telos*, 31 (Spring 1977), p. 22.

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agreement among a few firms controlling the various branches of production so that, without price competition, reduced costs were not translated into lower prices, but rather into higher profit.[6] The price index supplied by Magdoff for the United States (the dominant imperialist and monopolistic system) illustrates very well this reversal of tendencies. Using a starting point of 1823 as 100, the corresponding figures are: 75 for 1848, 134 for 1873, and 74 for 1898. But starting from 1898 as 100, the subsequent figures become 208 for 1923, 331 for 1948, and the first eight months of 1973 are 530.[7]

The historical take-off of inflation corresponds to the advent of imperialism. But this is more than mere coincidence and it is related to the fact that monopolies today can avoid the kind of price competition they faced in the nineteenth century.[8] Moreover, as recent developments in the oil industry have made clear, when a limited number of power centers controls a productive sector and the market, the monopolists can name their price, even tripling it from one week to the next, and can keep it up even in the face of stagnating or reduced consumption. This introduces another element into the discussion: stagflation.

In the past, the oligopolistic control of prices, though real, was not so iron-clad as it has been in the last twenty years. The necessity for liquidating inventories in periods of crisis brought the old competition back into focus and allowed for prices to be lowered. This was still the case in 1929.[9] But even then in a few sectors where oligopolistic agreements were especially strong, prices remained impervious to the crisis.[10] The subsequent strengthening of monopolies led to the generalization of the tendency to maintain prices even in times of crisis.[11] Thus, in the monopoly phase, prices normally rise. The

6. This phenomenon was already well-described at the beginning of the century. See R. Hilferding, *Il Capitale Finanziario* (*Das Finanzkapital*) (Milan, 1961), pp. 303ff. There are still a few sectors, such as agriculture, in which residues of 19th-century competition appear to endure. See P. Sylos Labini, *Oligopolio e Progresso Tecnico* (Turin, 1964), p. 145ff. See also F. Pollock, *Automation: a Study of Its Economic and Social Consequences* (New York, 1957), and Charles Levinson, *Capital, Inflation and the Multinationals* (London, 1971), p. 30ff.

7. Harry Magdoff, "A Note on Inflation," in *Monthly Review*, Vol. 25, N. 7, (Dec., 1973) pp. 23-4.

8. The tendency for prices to correspond to the value of goods could not operate in a monopolistic economy. Marx (*Capital, op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 167) already saw this precisely because the monopolists (or the oligopolists) have access to tools for controlling the market and prices which were unknown to 19th century capitalists. However, that does not eliminate the anarchy of capitalism, but rather brings it to a different level, as I have tried to show in my *Crisi Economica e Dialettica Storica* (Rome, 1975), Part I.

9. See Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt* (Boston, 1957), Vol. II.

10. See Charles P. Kindleberger, *World in Depression* (Berkeley, 1973), p. 33; P. Sylos Labini, *Economie Capitalistiche ed Economie Pianificate* (Bari, 1960), p. 125.

11. The 1957-58 recession in the United States (the most significant one between the 1930s and today, and which is surpassed in severity only by the present crisis) clearly illustrates this phenomenon. Since then the tendency has been repeatedly confirmed. For example, prices in Switzerland held recently, notwithstanding the fact that the country is probably in the severest recession of neo-capitalist society (industrial production dropped by 15% in 1975. See "Collettivo Politico di Ginevra," in *Manifesto*, Jan. 4, 1977, p. 2). The only exception of any note was India, which at the beginning of 1976 saw production rise and prices fall, thanks to extraordinary measures. But certain tendencies can be suppressed for some time, but not eliminated: already in the second half of the same year the situation changed even there (wholesale prices, among other

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problem with the increase is not *whether* it will occur, but only *how much* it will be. This means that any hope of solving the problem of inflation in this system is a dream.[12] To live under modern capitalism, therefore, means to live with inflation. But nowhere is it written that we must resign ourselves to life under capitalism.

Friedman's Interpretation

What we've said so far is, of course, open to dispute. In contraposition to the Marxist theory of inflation as rooted in monopolies, there is Friedman's theory as well as the classical theory of inflation resulting from rising labor costs.[13] Friedman's theses, along with those of the Chicago School of which he is a part, are widely discussed today because of the author's fame (he recently won the Nobel prize) and notoriety (he is an economic adviser to Pinochet).[14]

According to Friedman, inflation essentially results from an expansion in the circulation of money relative to the volume of production and productive investments.[15] In other words, there is too much money and too few commodities, and, since the first is exchanged for the second, it loses value. The argument seems correct: if there is a lot of money in circulation and only a few commodities available, money will lose some of its value. But this is only the tip of the iceberg. In practice, the deflationary policies of cracking down on credit that have been followed by various countries (policies designed to reduce the money supply) have not been very successful and sometimes, as in the case of Italy, they have been counterproductive.[16]

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things, rose by 11%). See G. Viratelle, "Inde: Coup de Frein au Redressement," in *L'année Economique et Sociale* of *Le Monde*, (Paris, 1977), pp. 91-92.

12. Even the Maldague report, which is the most "courageous" document produced by the system's technocrats in its proposal of a new anti-inflationary development model, takes pains to specify that today the best that can be attained is only an economy with *less* inflation, not one *without* inflation. See "Rapporto CEE sull'Inflazione," *Nuovo Sviluppo*, No. 3, 1976, pp. 15-17, 21, where it is argued that the proposed model is only less anarchic and inflationary than the present one.

13. There is also the theory of inflation as caused by an increase in demand over supply. But, as has been correctly noted (see J.C. Linetzky, "Les incertitudes de la théorie économique," in *Economia*, n. 29, p. 52) this position describes a situation without explaining it, i.e., without saying why demand grows more than supply.

14. For documentation of the connection with Pinochet, which Friedman has recently attempted to deny, see N.V., "Le professeur et le dictateur," in *Economia*, n. 21, pp. 31-32; A. Gunder Frank, "Lettre ouverte à Harold Harberger," in *Les Temps Modernes*, n. 342, p. 817ff. Recently it appears that Friedman has also become the advisor to the Argentine junta (see the anonymous editorial in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, n. 274, p. 21).

15. In Europe, a similar position is held by Jacques Rueff, in his *L'errore monetario dell'Occidente* (Milan, 1971). This thesis runs through Friedman's principal writings. See Milton Friedman, *Inflation: Causes and Consequences* (Bombay, 1963); *Essays on Positive Economies* (Chicago, 1970), 7th ed., p. 117ff. and p. 251ff.; *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago, 1963); *Inflation et systèmes monetaires* (Paris, 1969). Friedman's position has already attracted many criticisms which I share; see, e.g., Joan Robinson, *Economic Heresies* (New York, 1971); I. Guelfat, "Les derniers étendards. De John Maynard Keynes à Milton Friedman," in *L'Homme et la Société*, n. 22, p. 107ff. and p. 126ff.

16. See, among others, S. Baldone, *Produzione e distribuzione del reddito* (Bologna, 1976), p. 144. In the case of Italy, it is clear that there is little sense in curtailing credit if at the same time the state goes on a spending spree and the national deficit goes from 1100 billion lire ($1.8 billion) in

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Friedman, however, could say that these policies represented only a partial and belated application of his formula. Yet, the limits to Friedman's argument lie in its viewing the phenomenal and not the structural aspects of the problem. If the modern state expands its budget at a rate of growth that frequently exeeeds that of the gross national product (and this is a general phenomenon today)[17] there must be more profound reasons for it than a pervasive incompetence of those who govern. Furthermore, like it or not, this policy of free spending and massive state interventionism coincides with a boom of almost thirty years in the capitalist economy.

On closer examination, one cannot imagine the American boom of the 1950s and 1960s without the growth in military spending,[18] nor that of Scandinavian Social Democracy without the growth in social welfare spending.[19] The state contributed to the creation of unproductive or completely sham jobs, thus detracting resources from productive investments that served to fuel demand and the money supply. Yet, the system grew massively, albeit with a certain dose of inflation that until recently appeared to constitute an acceptable social cost, more than offset by economic growth. But what jammed the model? Why do we have less growth today (zero growth or even negative growth in a few cases) and more inflation? And is it possible to solve this problem?

This lack of analysis of inflation's structural causes is the limit of Friedman's position. It is no accident that in Chile, the country where Friedman's therapy was most radically put into practice, there was a net drop in production and employment and an unchecked rise in inflation. Friedman's inconsistency will become clear when considering his theory in practice—i.e., when it is translated into a feasible economic policy. The advice that he recently gave the British (and he has also given similar advice to the Italians)[20] is very simple: reduce state spending (decreasing welfare spending and taxes on the highest incomes, i.e., on capital gains) and stimulate productive investments. The lower fiscal pressure on high incomes should encourage investments.

In other words, part of the wealth returned to the market through state

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1968 to a sum approaching 14,000 billion lire ($16.5 billion) in 1975, while the deficit of local municipalities reaches vertiginous sums (4,800 billion lire or $5.6 billion in 1974, 6,000 lire or $7.0 billion in 1975, 11,000 lire or $13.0 billion predicted for 1977). A. Sarti, "Il Crollo della Finanza Locale," in *Economia e Territorio*, n. 6, 1976, p. 5.

17. For example, in the 1929-63 period in the U.S. the GNP grew approximately six-fold while state spending went from little more than 10 to more than 177 billion dollars (see Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital* [New York, 1967], p. 388).

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 151-155; see also M. Capanna, *Monopoli, DC e compromesso storico* (Milan, 1975), p. 47, note 44.

19. In this regard see Assar Lindbeck, *Swedish Economic Policy* (London, 1975). See also my *Il Capitalismo Impianificabile*, p. 70ff. where I present data showing that the phenomenon is universal. See also James O'Connor, *The Corporations and the State* (New York, 1974), p. 105ff.

20. Cf. interview in the illustrated year-end edition of *Tempo*, 1976. Friedman's position was defended in a letter to *Panorama* from Paolo Savona (see n. 550 of that magazine). For subsequent criticisms of Friedman, see R. Parboni, "Friedman in Italia," *Mondo Operaio*, 1 (1977), p. 112f. See also the anonymous editorial "Milton Friedman," in *L'Espresso*, December 26, 1976, p. 49.

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spending in the form of excess demand relative to the supply of goods, should be diverted toward production in order to put the economy back into equilibrium. Through its intervention, the state has shuffled the cards, thereby changing the market mechanism. Thus, it should withdraw as much as possible and let the market determine its own course. It is easily understandable why, in the face of these proposals, even the calm British lost their temper: both Lord Balogh and the liberal *Guardian* quite unceremoniously told the Chicago economist to go to hell.

Friedman does not understand how a vast area of unproductive expenses is essential to a system such as ours. In the monopolistic capitalist system, industrial and productive employment stagnate in a manner far more distinct than in the past. The unprecedented use of capital-intensive technologies (developed after World War II) allows monopolies to increase production consistently with hardly any spur to employment.[21] The small- or medium-sized enterprise, oppressed by heavily colonial relations to monopolies, has a very weak financial and industrial structure, and because of this, even though it uses labor-intensive technologies, has little chance for growth and does not generate an adequate demand for labor.

It has been estimated that modern capitalism would require a gross annual increase in revenues of 4 percent in order to maintain current employment levels, and a much greater increase in order to increase them. The evolution of the U.S. economy in this period confirms such a tendency.[22] The abnormal expansion of the tertiary sector and public administration in advanced countries further confirms this thesis. Without the "artificially" created new jobs, the number of unemployed would have grown frightfully. Thus, by taking money through taxation from the capitalists as well as workers, the state has prevented accumulation from growing too much in relation to the capacity of the market to absorb it and, by creating new jobs (even though unproductive and a sham), has contributed to the stimulation of consumption.[23] State "clientism" is certainly responsive to political requirements, but, above all, to those of political economy.

21. In this regard see F. Pollock, *Automation: a Study of its Economic and Social Consequences*, (New York, 1957). In addition, Pollock notes that the rigidity of prices prevents an adequate growth in consumption relative to the growth in productive capacity, unlike the 19th century when price reductions subsequent to technological innovations permitted a greater equilibrium and allowed the subsequent recovery of technological unemployment thanks to increased demand and, hence, production.

22. This is the so-called Okun's Law, on which see Barry Commoner, *The Poverty of Power* (New York, 1976), pp. 239-40. In this light see the (anonymous) article "Carter Presenta il suo Piano Economico. Il Piede è di Nuovo sull'Acceleratore," in *Manifesto*, January 9, 1977, p. 4. See also Paul Samuelson, "Il Miracolo ci Sarà, ma Piccolino," in *L'Espresso*, Jan. 9, 1977, p. 85, which advances similar predictions for 1977: with an increase in prices of 5.3% (over 1976), in GNP of 5.7%, in profits of 11.1% (sic), unemployment should drop from the presently elevated rate of 7.6% to 7.2%. In other words, the rate of increase in employment would be less than 1/13 of the rate of increase in GNP and *circa* 1/28 of the rate of increase in profits.

23. It is well known that capitalists in large part avoid taxation (see my *Il Capitalismo Impianificabile*, p. 64ff). Nevertheless, to some extent, taxes are paid even by the capitalists; avoiding taxation certainly does not mean escaping it altogether. I do not agree in this regard with Rosa Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital: An Anti-Critique* (New York, 1972), according

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Friedman's prescription, seeking to stimulate productive investments through reduced state spending, intensifies the problem of the relation between production and consumption: on the one hand the number of workers or their incomes would be reduced (laying off state workers or reducing their wages), while on the other hand we would have investments resulting in the production of many commodities and little employment. But who would buy these commodities? In the face of the explosion of the production-consumption contradiction, which can no longer be controlled by the old mechanism, Friedman proposes a remedy that would further aggravate the already exploded contradiction without resolving it (witness the case of Chile).

Thus, the illusion of this interpretation is clear: crises and inflation cannot be resolved by controlling the circulation of money through state spending and taxation. The distortions in circulation and consumption are not pathologies of the system but tools essential to the system's equilibrium, even if today they are no longer capable of containing the contradictions. To eliminate an inadequate medicine is not, however, tantamount to curing the disease but, rather, to hasten the patient's death. Furthermore, Friedman's view that high taxes prevent capitalists from investing is ridiculous. He forgets about tax evasions, which greatly mitigate the progressive character of taxation. Moreover, in the past, despite the "oppressive" tax system, capital was invested (and how) because economic prospects were good, whereas today these prospects are bleak (and certainly not due to taxation).[24] Even lower taxes would not significantly affect investments (which would not solve the crisis anyway, inasmuch as increased investments would still be unable to lower unemployment adequately).

There is, however, another aspect of Friedman's proposal that makes it seem even more absurd and which demonstrates the reactionary and nineteenth-century character of his thought:[25] Friedman's proposal to privatize many public enterprises on the ground that they are managed according to "political" and not economic criteria. But public enterprises are part of the capitalist system and fulfill a particular function in it. Further-

to whom the tertiary workers, not having an independent income (their income is subtracted from that of capitalists and workers), would not create new demand. In reality, the fact that a portion of capital income goes to the State (and to public employees) through taxation, or to the private part of the tertiary sector, if it does not depress the rate of profits (as Gilman thinks) then it prevents accumulation from growing too much relative to consumption. Above all, in the advanced stages of development the incomes of capitalists which end up in the tertiary sector and maintain the consumption of the workers in that sector would be invested, shattering the equilibrium between accumulation (and production) and capacity of consumption. The development of the tertiary sector, therefore, helps maintain the equilibrium in the system.

24. Even in terms of employment the predictions are discouraging. See B. Knapp, "Vivre avec le chômage, le saut dans l'inconnu," in *Economia*, n. 15, pp. 10ff; S.A., "Chômeurs ce n'est qu'un debout," *ibid.*, n. 28, p. 28; B. Knapp, "Comment travaillerons nous demain?" *ibid.*, no. 30, pp. 78ff.

25. In reality Friedman's position can be accepted only by the Chilean junta, which represents an extreme case of subordination to imperialist interests. The Brazilian regime which has a very interventionist economic policy rejects such a reactionary form of neo-liberalism.

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more, "economic" administrative criteria have been central to their management.[26] For example, even state enterprises such as British Petroleum, with a board of directors resembling a miniature House of Lords, have always operated independently of the state. Thus, it is not surprising that BP had no scruples in supporting the trend toward increased oil prices, which benefited its balance sheet but certainly not that of the British economy.[27] If BP were to become private, its policies could not possibly change, because they already are privatistic.

Although the growth of publicly owned or subsidized enterprises parallels the crisis, these enterprises go from private to state hands precisely because they do not withstand the crisis and fail to return a profit. Today private enterprises themselves would be the first to reject this feature of Friedman's doctrine.[28]

The Cost-of-Labor Theory of Inflation

The second bourgeois theory of inflation is the classical one according to which wage increases push up prices.[29] At the theoretical level, it can be seen that this does not necessarily take place. In fact, if a worker produces 20 units per day of a certain commodity and the total cost of his labor is $20, the unit cost of labor will be $1. If a worker in another country costs $25 per day but produces 30 units of the same commodity, the unit cost of his labor will be lower and more competitive, notwithstanding the greater absolute cost. The productivity of labor is clearly no less decisive than the cost of wages in determining the costs of labor per unit and the competitiveness of an economy.[30]

Thus, other things being equal, higher wages are not *per se* the cause of higher prices if they are matched by a parallel rise in productivity. If this does

26. Obviously the fact that state enterprises operate with largely economic ends (profit) does not mean that such ends are always realized. But this is obviously true for private enterprises as well, especially in times of crisis, during which there is a growing number of "public" and private operators who run into difficulties. Therefore, possible deficits incurred in this (negative) economic phase by many public enterprises does not mean that they do not pursue or have not pursued profit as their end. On the subordination of public to private industry in Europe see O'Connor, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State* (New York, 1973), pp. 183-188.

27. In this regard see Anthony Sampson, *The Seven Sisters* (New York, 1975), p. 263, cf. also pp. 52, 199-200, and 304.

28. In this regard see E. Pontarollo, *Il Salvataggio Industriale nell' Europa in crisi* (Bologna, 1976). The ideal for private firms is for the state to intervene in order to plug their corporate deficits without taking a controlling interest in their management. But even this type of policy conflicts with Friedman's neo-liberalism and his proposal to contract the state's budget. On the other hand, this policy would eliminate a few effects of the crisis but it would not extirpate its causes, nor could it be prolonged indefinitely without a global bankruptcy.

29. Recently reformulated by John Kenneth Galbraith, *Money, Whence it Came, Where it Went* (Boston, 1975), p. 308; see also G. Ruta, *Passato e Futuro dell'Inflazione in Italia* (Turin, 1971), p. 31ff.

30. Precisely because of this, Marx (in "Wages, Price and Profit," in Marx and Engels, *Selected Works* [New York, 1972], pp. 186-229) notes that goods made with high wages were the best buy; high wages, in fact, already a century ago corresponded to high levels of productivity and, hence, to greater competitiveness. Now, however, with the advent of monopolies, higher levels of productivity do not determine price reductions as in Marx's time.

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not occur—i.e., if productivity does not grow—it means that there are structural and social bottlenecks that must be removed. Indeed, it is normal for wages and productivity to grow together and high wages in fact stimulate the use of advanced technologies that employ skilled and highly productive labor. If this normal link is broken, it means that the economy is sick. To place the responsibility for this sickness solely on wages is absurd—all the more so in light of the fact that wages and the union policies that negotiate them articulate the position of a class that does not control the production process. If the normal functioning of the production process is blocked, then, the blame should fall presumably on whoever controls it, not on the subaltern classes. What spurs theory of labor costs as the cause of inflation and crisis is precisely the attempt to transfer the costs of the crisis onto the working class, thus exculpating those who are really responsible.

This will become clearer later in the analysis of the Italian situation, which is typical both because the theory in question has been forcefully advanced there by some economists and because the attempt to shift the costs of the crisis onto the workers is widespread—especially in countries hit worst by the crisis (Italy, France, England), where containment measures have already been implemented.[31] An examination of the Italian case will reveal the ideological and mystifying character of the theory.

Only a few years ago anyone advocating a reduction in wages (even if toward anti-inflationary ends) or linking wages to productivity was considered a reactionary by the left. Yet today, one of the official economists of the Italian Communist Party advances precisely such a proposal.[32] But are wages really so high as to undermine the competitiveness of our economy?

A recent survey by the Zurich Union Bank of Switzerland provides a set of significant data on the comparative wage levels of the larger Western and Third World cities. A skilled worker in May 1976 earned $382 net ($436 gross) in Milan; $633 net ($826 gross) in Brussels; $584 ($653) in Paris; $683 ($957) in Oslo; $727 ($885) in New York; $674 ($837) in Vienna; $615 ($691) in Tokyo; $1050 ($1275) in Zurich; $1110 ($1355) in Montreal. Even in Madrid and Athens, the wages of skilled workers are slightly higher than in Milan. Only in the Third World (Istanbul, Singapore, Rio, Buenos Aires) are lower wage levels found. Among cities of advanced countries the differences oscillate from around 45 percent more (in Dusseldorf) to 300 percent more (Montreal).[33] The only large city in the advanced countries to have the same

31. See the essays on the "Modigliani Controversy," in *Salario e Crisi Economica* (Rome, 1976). In England the Conservatives tried to curtail strikes with the Union Law of 1971 which was repealed a few years later by the Labourites. The latter, however, are trying to reach similar results through a political "deal" with trade unions.

32. See E. Peggio, *La Crisi Economica Italiana* (Milan, 1976), p. 102, who allows a wage increase only where the increases in productivity are greater in Italy than abroad and in sectors where labor costs are lower here than elsewhere. That is, the dynamic of wages is subordinated to the productive and competitive parameters of the system, which was precisely what the CGIL (Federation of Italian Trade Unions) was rejecting back in 1963.

33. An excerpt of this study appears in *Corriere della Sera* of November 10, 1976, p. 22 (economics and finance section). The same study reveals that the cost of living is not very different

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level as Milan is London ($386 in net wages). Added to this is the fact that in Italy the weak sectors of the working class (small and medium-sized enterprise, home workers) are far more extensive than in the other advanced countries, precisely because these sectors are poorly unionized, they are notoriously incapable of attaining the wage levels of large industry (Milan).

This is admitted even by Professor Fuà (who has computed labor costs) when he specified that he was referring only to "regular" labor. Yet, even according to his figures, the hourly cost of labor (including heavy fringe benefits) in Italy in 1972 was greater than in France, but lower than in West Germany, Belgium and Holland.[34] The average hourly cost of labor in other countries was approximately 1748 lire ($2.80) compared to 1601 lire ($2.60) in Italy, certainly not a disastrous situation, even though Fuà's figures do not specify productivity, i.e., the cost per unit produced. Clearly Germany, with its average hourly costs of 1983 lire ($3.20), will have a more competitive economy if labor productivity compensates for higher labor costs. From the comparative analysis of labor cost per unit product done by the First National City Bank, it turns out that in 1974, using a base of 1974 equal to 100 as a measure of the cost of labor in Germany, Italy stood at 120 as against 80-90 for France, 50 for the United States, and 90 for England and Japan. This gap in competitiveness was closed by the *de facto* devaluation of the lira which provided a brief breather for the Italian economy.[35]

Several things become clear from this data: (a) direct wages are scandalously low; (b) the total hourly cost of labor (including social costs) does not turn out to be so high compared to other countries; (c) productivity can no longer compare with that of other countries.[36] Given this state of

in various cities of the developed world. The standard budget for a medium-sized family, including the cost of housing, takes up $362 in Milan (that is almost all of wages), $367 in Amsterdam, $467 in Copenhagen, and $380 in Brussels, etc. Frequently, then, the relation between wages and costs of living is worse in Milan than in other cities in countries normally considered advanced.

34. See G. Fuà, *Occupazione e Capacità Produtive: la Realtà Italiana* (Bologna, 1976), p. 68ff. On the other hand, in an interview in the *Nuova Società* of July, 1974, Umberto Agnelli maintained that Italian labor costs were 50% lower than even those of the French (see "Nuovi Modelli per le Relazioni Industriali," in *Politica del Diritto*, 1974, p. 537).

35. See S. Cingloni, "L'Operaio Intasca la Metà di Quanto Costa," in *L'Unità*, November 9, 1976, p. 6. See also M. Matteuzzi, "Prezzi, Salari e Svalutazione," in *Inchiesta*, n. 22, p. 41ff. where it is noted that the devaluation has contributed to the consistent protection of the competitiveness of our unit labor costs.

36. A certain recovery in this area from 1973 to 1976 need not deceive anyone (see R.S., "La Produttività è in Aumento. Basso Utilizzo degli Impianti," in *L'Unità*, Jan. 7, 1977, p. 6) since, given the stagnation of investments characterizing Italian economy, this recovery is due to the use of "archaic" methods (increased physical exploitation of labor, stagnation or reduction in the employment level), while the competitiveness of a capitalist economy is usually measured on the basis of what we could term the "technological productivity" (forgive the heresy for a Marxist) of labor. It is clear, on the other hand, that the Italian economy no longer stands up to international standards. In this conjunction Dr. Arena (managing director of the Institute for the Reconstruction of Industry), citing the data on the Italian balance of trade deficit with Common Market partners, recently noted: "The Italian market has become a land for conquest" (see R. Arena, "L'Europa e l'Italia de Fronte ai Problemi di Ristrutturazione Imposti dai Mutamenti dell'Economia Internazionale," (Round Table) in *Quaderni ISRIL*, n. 2, 1975, p. 22). Moreover, Italy cannot seek constant recourse to massive doses of devaluation which block consumption and internal demand (feeding inflation) and greatly increase the cost of foreign goods (the importation

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affairs, why focus at the direct wage, the most innocent of all? One common response is that the reform of the social welfare system[37] would not satisfy immediate problems and that it is necessary to stimulate investments in order to spur productivity. In the meantime, the reduction of consumption and demand would help curb the inflationary spiral.[38]

Since labor costs in Italy, judged on an hourly basis, are not exceptional, it is the unit cost (tied to labor productivity) that gives rise to concern. Thus, the cause of capitalist disaffection with regard to investments is not the hourly costs of labor. In fact, Italy is becoming an underdeveloped country exporting wealth (labor-power and capital) which it would need for its own development because Italian monopoly capital, although dominant, has a far more restricted base than in other advanced countries. For example, in 1970, approximately 70 percent of the industrial labor force was employed in small- and medium-sized enterprises.[39] With the entry into the Common Market and the consequent heightening of competition, this vast sector became rapidly marginalized while the oligopolistic sector became more and more integrated on a multinational global scale. The result is that Italy is now considered one of the countries in which to invest. The trouble is that the structural weakness (marginality) of such a large part of the economy attracts few investments and stimulates the flight of locally formed capital. Hence, little is invested and generally labor productivity cannot grow adequately. Various attempts have been made to raise the level of profits and

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of many of which, e.g., petroleum, would be difficult to restrict). Even M. Salvati in *Contro l'Inflazione* (Rome, 1974), p. 25, notes that by now there cannot be a real upswing in productivity and competitiveness without a serious recovery of investments.

37. We are alluding not to the shifting of social costs onto the state treasury which, in our view, would not resolve the problems of the Italian economy, but to a serious reform that would reduce the wastes (absurd and notorious) of this sector, one of the pillars of the clientism of the party in power—the Christian Democrats. The problem is that in Italy this sector is also one of the pillars of the bureaucratic revenues necessary for capitalism's equilibrium.

38. This is Modigliani's prescription. His suggestions can be found in *Salario e Crisi Economica, op.cit.*

39. Here, underdevelopment does not mean tardiness or absence of development, but rather subordination to the economic instruments of imperialism which determine an organically higher rate of profit for monopolies, penalizing small and medium-sized industry and agriculture and, hence, those countries in which those activities have a higher proportionate weight. But has Italy then been a developed country in the past? Perhaps it would be more correct to say that Italy has tried to do so without succeeding. However, this matter does not interest us here and, paying homage to the current terminology, we will refer to Italy as a country belonging to the advanced world, even if that is no longer the case, or never was.

40. Our position (on the lower average rates of profit and productivity of small and medium-sized enterprises) appears to conflict with Fuà's figures (*op. cit.*, p. 52) according to which, in 1961, productivity in enterprises employing between 10 and 99 workers was lower than that of very large enterprises (with more than 1,000 employees), but greater than that of enterprises with 99 to 1,000 employees. This, however, conflicts with much more up-to-date figures provided by F. Farina (*L'Accumulazione in Italia* [Bari, 1976], p. 76ff.) and of F. Parrillo ("Finanziamenti delle Piccole e Medie Imprese," in *Rivista di Politica Economica,* in 1971, p. 128), as well as with various more recent regional analyses. If the level of productivity of such a characteristic and vast segment of small and medium-sized enterprises were so high, it would be difficult to comprehend their economic marginality. On the dubious character of Fuà's statistical data see R. Convenevole, "Profitto Zero e Errori di Calcolo," in *Inchiesta,* n. 24, p. 3ff.

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productivity: intensifying the physical exploitation of the work force,[41] minimizing controllable unproductive costs by making workers labor under otherwise dangerous conditions,[42] undertaking land speculations that intensify housing problems and make cities uninhabitable, etc. The phenomenon of marginalization-underdevelopment which plagues Italy is now spreading to other advanced countries. In response to this trend, the centers of imperialist power are becoming even more concentrated, shunting aside old partners.

In summary, the case of Italy provides the most convincing refutation of the labor theory of inflation. The Italian economy has moved from creeping inflation (normal in the era of monopolies) to wildfire inflation due to the rupture of a the wage-productivity relation (a more extreme effect of monopolization). The working class has only reacted against this reality: its action was not the cause but the consequence of a crisis whose uncontrollability pushes capital to recover its profit with wildfire inflation. To reduce direct labor costs which are neither the cause of the crisis nor of inflation[43] would not resolve anything. It would only lead to a further drop in internal demand that would in turn make investments in Italy even less attractive than they already are. The effects of this policy would be to stimulate further migration of capital abroad, without diminishing prices, since in times of demand-crises monopoly capital tends to recover its losses by upholding or increasing those very prices.[44]

The Marxist Explanation

There is no way of explaining the inflationary phenomenon other than the Marxist theory of inflation, which claims that it is due to monopolies. Nowadays this theory is accepted even by non-Marxists.[45] Some aspects of this theory, however, have not been sufficiently studied and are in need of further

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41. This has been a typical means used by small and medium-sized enterprises (see F. Garibaldo, T. Rinaldi, A. Zappelli, "Un'Analisi sull'Impresa Minore in Emilia. Ristrutturazione Capitalistica e Sfruttamento Operaio," in *Fabbrica e Stato*, n. 2, p. 26ff.).

42. The growth of industrial accidents (see A. Carlo, "Il problema della Nocività e l'Art. 9 dello Statuto dei Lavoratori," in *Critica del Diritto*, n. 2, p. 81) well demonstrates this tendency to reduce burdensome unproductive costs of safety thus giving Italy the record in accident statistics.

43. The bourgeoisie has already confronted powerful attacks by the labor movement demanding a redistribution of income (1961-1963) but it has made a recovery so that on the eve of 1968 it had almost returned to the level of the early '60s. The problem, then, is to understand why the bourgeoisie is no longer able to recover as it did ten years ago. To state that the working class is stronger is a tautology, because the greater power of the proletariat largely stems from the greater weakness of the bourgeoisie. The labor movement of 1968-70 was in reality as powerful as that of 1961-62. Now, however, the bourgeoisie is weaker due to the marginalization process of the Italian economy, which took place in the 1960s.

44. Stagflation has become the rule in recessionary phases since 1957-58.

45. For example, it is accepted by the drafters of the Maldague report, who are technocrats, occasionally including persons tied to this or that European socialist party, but who certainly could not be called Marxists. On this subject see also the classical essay by Joan Robinson, "The Impossibility of Competition," in *Monopolies and Competition and Their Regulation* (New York, 1954), p. 245ff.

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clarification. Thus, it is necessary to explain both why the inflation rate of individual countries differs and why it is not directly proportional to the extent of monopoly domination in these countries. In fact, countries like Germany and the United States, which have the highest levels of monopolistic concentration, have relatively low rates of inflation. This situation seems paradoxical: inflation is a result of monopolies, but tends to hit hardest those countries with a less concentrated industrial structure, i.e., with a lesser degree of monopolization. Monopoly prices, however, are the mainspring but not the only source of inflation. Other factors, varying from country to country, contribute to bringing about different rates of price increases. On closer examination, however, these supplementary factors turn out to be phenomena generated by the structure of monopolies. In other words, monopolies generate a direct inflationary effect (monopoly prices) and a series of induced inflationary effects which have the greatest repercussions on weaker countries.

There are five types of secondary effects: tax evasion, deficits in the balance of payments, the expansion of public services, the expansion of private services, and agricultural underdevelopment.

Tax Evasion. Although not a result of monopolies, the phenomenon of tax evasion assumed enormous proportions in the era of monopoly capitalism. Indeed, in the United States, it became significant in the late 1930s in connection with Roosevelt's attempts at reform[46] and the growth in the size of the federal budget. In England it began to reach alarming proportions with Labor's post-war fiscal reform.[47] The growth of multinationals during the post-war period served as a stimulus for further tax evasion. Thus, the phenomenon has become especially pervasive in the last few decades, largely because of the expansion of the state's budget. But what is the relation between tax evasion and inflation?

The inherent tendency of the state to expand is accentuated in times of crisis, when it is necessary for the state to intervene in the economy in order to create new employment or to protect existing jobs. Raising new revenues only through direct taxation is very difficult for several reasons: (a) capital largely escapes direct taxation (such evasion is structural and ineliminable) and, if the state adopted a strong-arm approach toward capital in a time of crisis, the result would be the stifling of the private investment essential for overcoming the crisis; (b) indirect taxation of consumers, i.e., the taxation of goods rather than direct taxation of wages, is more acceptable politically because consumers can control its effects by reducing their consumption of certain goods hit by the tax; (c) indirect taxation can also be used toward other ends, e.g., hitting goods which effect the balance of payments; (d) in a market economy those who consume more must pay more for public services, which very frequently are not different from other services bought on the market since the firms that administer them are fiscally autonomous and in many

46. Gabriel Kolko, *Wealth and Power in America* (New York, 1965), p. 30ff.
47. J. Strachey, *Contemporary Capitalism* (London, 1959), pp. 146ff.

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cases are mixed public enterprises that have to return a profit.[48]

For these reasons, the state increases its budget by utilizing indirect taxation as a source of funds. However, indirect taxation immediately puts pressure on prices, pushing them upward. Recourse to indirect taxation is more pressing in those cases in which the portion of the budget contributed by the direct taxation of wages is reduced. This occurs when direct wages are not high or when the employment base has contracted. Italy, the country in which only a third of the population is employed[49] and in which direct wages are relatively low, clearly illustrates this tendency: since 1970 there have been innumerable austerity programs meant to contain consumption and seek new funds for a recovery that never comes. It is clear that inflation is greatly aided by tax evasion among those with high incomes, since it forces the state to seek revenues from the great masses of workers and consumers by recourse to indirect taxation. It is likewise clear that inflation is most intense precisely in the countries with the weakest economic structure, which are those with the lowest tax base (lowest direct wages and-or employment). In addition, the phenomenon is most severe during crisis periods when budget needs increase while the tax base contracts. Therefore, during crisis periods inflation tends to increase drastically.

The Deficit in the Balance of Payments. This second effect brought about by monopolies is a result of the tendency to marginalize entire economic zones on a world scale. Underdeveloped countries have a chronic deficit in their balance of trade.[50] The price of the goods they purchase grows constantly because their currencies are devalued in relation to the currencies of strong countries. Thus, countries with an apparently pre-monopolistic industrial structure have dangerous rates of inflation, clearly higher than those of the advanced countries. Furthermore, the poor competitiveness of a country can lead the government to use fiscal means to restrict certain consumer items (imported goods), a policy which has additional inflationary consequences. In times of crisis, moreover, the disparities between rich and poor countries tend to grow, along with the chronic debt of poor countries, which further fuels

48. See for example E. Cherki and M. Wievorka, "Luttes Sociales en Italie: Magistrats et Autoréducteurs," in *Les Temps Modernes*, n. 364, p. 642, where it is pointed out that in the Italian SIP (which manages telephone service, by now unanimously considered public) 54% of the shares belong to the (State) STET [Turin Telephone Company], while large shares give the lead to ITT and FIAT which, as authoritative "minority" shareholders, have influenced the management of the service in a private direction.

49. It has been pointed out that the official statistics lie, given the fact that there is a vast labor black market not counted by the statistics. On this subject see most recently CENSIS, *L'Occupazione Occulta* (Rome, 1976). This is true, but it should also be pointed out that it is a matter of notoriously marginal and precarious employment while, on the other hand, many of those officially considered employed are, primarily in the tertiary sector, underemployed or concealed unemployed. The actual rate of employment is therefore undoubtedly very low and places Italy at the bottom of the ladder among advanced countries.

50. See P. Jaleé, *Imperialisme en 1970* (Paris, 1969), p. 80ff. The recent events in the petroleum exporting countries do not change the picture; even for them the outlook is bleak and a return to deficits is predicted soon (see "Ou'va l'Argent Arabe?" in *Annuaire Jeune Afrique*, 1975, p. 358, and A. Carlo, "The Oil Crisis," *op.cit.*, p. 24).

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inflation. Thus, in various ways, the disequilibrium of the balance of trade deficit intensifies inflationary tendencies.[51]

The Expansion of Public Services. The growth of the tertiary sector is a phenomenon as old as capital,[52] but it has acquired special significance only in the last few decades, during which service workers have tended to become the majority of all workers in neo-capitalist countries.[53] In the past, the development of industrial society required a shift in labor-power from agriculture to services, both private as well as public. The growth of industrial production required a network of private and public services unknown during the feudal epoch, so that originally the phenomenon of labor-power migrating from the country to the city (from agriculture to industry and services) was natural. Now, however, the state creates a mass of totally useless jobs in public administration since the growth of monopolies and the resulting stagnation of employment would cause unemployment to rise rapidly beyond safe limits. These workers receive salaries derived from the national wealth through taxation, but in exchange produce little or nothing. This state of affairs can lead to a situation in which the demand for goods and services could exceed the supply. As long as the economy runs smoothly, this is not noticed (in fact, the existence of a large section of unproductive consumption is one of the conditions for the system's equilibrium). However, when the economy no longer functions smoothly because of an economic crisis, this demand, which does not produce any wealth, becomes an element of inflation. While production slackens and drops off, the mass of money represented by the unproductive incomes of these "workers" puts pressure on prices.

There is no way out of this situation since, as already indicated, Friedman's solution of reducing public wastes, stimulating productive investments and, with them, the employment of productive workers in order to revitalize demand, does not work. Furthermore, it is clear that the inflationary effect of the expansion of public services is a function of the level of crowding and wastes presented by public administration in various countries, as well as in relation to the general structure of employment. Indeed, weaker countries in which employment levels are very low can hardly have nearly half of their already low employment absorbed by the tertiary sector and public administration. This generates a deadly squeeze between productive employment and unproductive consumption, which is obviously translated

51. Obviously it can also happen that rich countries end up with a deficit due to the business cycle or to other particular reasons. It is well known that American military expenses in Vietnam weakened the dollar (see L. Huberman and P. Sweezy, "Gold, Dollars, and Empire," *Monthly Review,* Vol. 19 N. 9, February, 1968, pp. 1-9), favoring U.S. competitors (the other imperialist partners) along with the well-known inter-imperialist tensions (two dollar crises, etc.). Here, however, we are only referring to deficits caused by the marginal character of an economy.

52. Already in 1600, William Petty predicted this (thus, we have "Petty's Law"), later recorded by Marx in the last century.

53. For example in the U.S.—the leading country—white-collar workers comprised three-fourths of the whole urban labor force at the end of the 1960s. See Paul Sweezy, "Marx and the Proletariat," *Monthly Review,* Vol. 19, No. 7 (December 1967), pp. 25-42.

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into an inflationary push.

The Expansion of Private Services. This expression refers in particular to the commercial network which appears efficient and concentrated only in some neo-capitalist countries, while in others it is very fragmentary.[54] This stems from the curtailment of employment due to the growth of monopolies pushing part of the labor-force to find an outlet in commerce. In a few countries, the outlet for this labor-force has been found in other tertiary sectors (so that the commercial network is relatively efficient), but such a solution is not always possible. The costs of this expansion, however, fall heavily on the consumer who, in practice, has to supply the means of subsistence to hundreds of thousands of workers who would otherwise be unemployed. The distribution costs (the costs of these workers) fall on the consumer and obviously on the price level.

Agricultural Underdevelopment. The underdevelopment of agriculture gives rise to two phenomena. The first is the flight of labor from the countryside to the city (in industry or in services), which guarantees incomes that the agricultural sector cannot provide. This causes urban sprawl and a rise in the prices of land, houses, and rents that greatly contributes to inflation. In countries with a more underdeveloped agricultural base than the average, the second inflationary effect is a result of the balance of trade deficit which weakens the nation's currency. But what is the cause of agricultural underdevelopment and migration? Originally, agricultural migration and urbanization were positive phenomena. This is no longer true. With the rise of monopolies, agriculture has been subjected to a heavy rate of exploitation and colonization which is structural and ineliminable. The levels of underdevelopment vary, but everywhere agriculture is subjugated and cannot guarantee the same incomes as industry—thus the emigration of labor from the countryside. In weaker countries emigration becomes a further cause of the agricultural balance of payment deficit (the increased productivity of labor does not succeed in offsetting the reduction of the labor force employed in that sector, the global increase in population, and the diminution of cultivated land). Ultimately, we always locate the monopolies' impact and their dynamics which have the greatest repercussions precisely in those sectors and countries that are economically weaker and most vulnerable in times of crisis.

Inflation and the Common Market

The prominent weight of monopolies in the inflationary process has been recently admitted even by the Maldague Report (drafted by a committee of Common Market sages), which the Common Market has attempted to conceal.[55] The message of the report is clear: "Inflation is ultimately

54. See, for example, the U.N. *Statistical Yearbook* of 1972, p. 384ff.

55. But then the bombshell eventually exploded and the report aroused considerable interest in the Common Market countries. See, e.g., the interview granted to J.P. Marthoz by Maldague ("Les Véritables Causes de l'Inflation," in *Economia*, n. 29, p. 50ff.).

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inseparable from a new type of economy, characterized by the emergence of a powerful meso-economic sector (the multinational corporations) and by the growth of rigidity; by a social dynamic that, along with its undeniable positive aspects, is translated into inflationary consumption through the exacerbation of quantitative demands, through profound changes in the distribution of the national product and in the structure of revenues, without accepting the necessary counterparts of this transformation; by the tendencies toward corporativism, and by the inefficiency of political and social mediation."[56]

Further on, in explaining these initial statements, the authors of the report make it clear that the meso-economic enterprises (multinationals) translate reduced costs that are due to technology into increased profits (masked in their balance sheets),[57] rather than into reduced prices, and that the declining quality of life in this system leads to corporative and merely monetary demands rather than to demands for reforms, thus causing inflationary phenomena. The responsibility, however, does not rest with workers but with owners, the state, and the unions which, by not cooperating in supporting reforms, push workers toward corporativistic demands.[58]

The report does not contain any new analysis. For decades, leftist critics have taken pains to show that it was not the workers but the system and those who control it (the monopolies) who were responsible for inflation. Furthermore, certain jugglings of books that were disclosed by the report (e.g., transfer prices) had been revealed years ago. The courageous character of the report lies elsewhere. For the first time, and in the midst of a virulent campaign against labor demands supposedly "responsible" for inflation, a group of the system's experts places the blame on the "steam owners" and reminds political leaders of their responsibility by denouncing their collusion with multinational monopolies. It is not the sermon that caused all the fuss, but the pulpit from which it was preached: it is one thing when certain claims are made by Paul Sweezy or Samir Amin, and another when they are put forth by a team of authoritative and committed "Eurocrats."

Unfortunately, the political program recommended by Maldague and associates is a collection of banalities, commonplaces and incongruities. It proposes the following set of interventions which do not aim at beating inflation but only at creating a less anarchic system with less inflation: (a) control over multinational corporations and their bookkeeping in order to prevent their little game of transfer prices;[59] (b) self-management and

56. See "Rapperto CEE sull'Inflazione," *op. cit.*, p. 13.

57. The method to which the report refers is the well-known one of transfer prices (see Charles Levinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100). Through a game of fictitious prices, profits are transferred to a parent company in one of the tax havens (Switzerland, Bahamas, Luxemburg, etc.) in which taxes on profits are nothing or close to it. On the organic inequality of tax burdens in a capitalist society see most recently James O'Connor, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*, *op. cit.*

58. See "Rapporto CEE sull'Inflazione," *op. cit.*, p. 14ff.

59. Even here, however, it is "realistically" noted that it is necessary only to "contain" not eliminate, the statistical and fiscal secrets of the corporations (see "Rapporto CEE sull'Inflazione," *op. cit.*, p. 26).

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industrial democracy; (c) egalitarianism in the distribution of income and reappraisal (even compensatory) of manual labor and its social function; (d) changes in the organization of labor in order to make it less alienating; (e) a new development model based on full employment (a reduced work-week) and on social consumption; (f) economic planning.

It seems almost like a program for constructing a socialist society. In fact, Maldague and associates seek to realize the characteristics of socialism (self-management, industrial democracy, egalitarianism, the end of alienation, social consumption, full employment planning, etc.) within a capitalist society. This is precisely the absurdity of the report: proposing socialism within capitalism, proposing a system in which private property and self-management co-exist, along with immense private concentrations of income and power (the multinantionals) and an egalitarian income and power structure which in the Chinese fashion reevaluate the role of manual labor. Overriding all other considerations should be a concern with control of the large multinational corporations, which possess enormous power and are able to make every state's economic policy useless. If this power is not subjected to public control, every discussion of a new economic policy is senseless. But the report does not speak of expropriating the multinationals—only controlling them.

A political power the size of the multinationals is needed to bring about public control. This power, however, does not exist since the Common Market is not even a federation of states. Furthermore, Japan and above all the United States—home of the biggest multinationals—are not even a part of it. But even in a distant future, the possibility of achieving a federation of the major capitalist states (at least Common Market countries, the U.S. and Japan) is highly unlikely since the contradiction between the multinationalization of capitalist economies and the political fragmentation of the states cannot be eliminated.[60]

There appears to be no solution to the problem of multinationals. Even before they attained the immense power they now have and when monopoly capital had a prevailingly national character, anti-trust laws and laws for the public regulation of the economy—from fiscal reforms to Roosevelt's Securities and Exchange Commission—were either disregarded or evaded.[61]

60. See my *Sociologia dell'Imperialismo, op. cit.*, p. 62ff. where I analyze the typical case of the Common Market which represents the most important attempt at economic and political integration. The monopolistic-multinational development has created a contradictory and lame form of economic integration, with powerful and growing imbalances between regions and countries. Such imbalances cause the balance of trade (and the currency) of weak countries to explode and engender a continuous monetary conflict, a continuous dance of devaluation-revaluation between weak and strong countries. Amidst this chaos, there is not even success in creating a common monetary policy (and, hence, a common currency). But without a common currency, a united European State is inconceivable.

61. In this regard my *Il Capitalismo Impianificabile*, p. 31, note 44 and p. 190. In reality the practices of corruption, tax fraud, etc. have not in any way been eliminated by the Securities and Exchange Commission in over 40 years of activity. Periodically, it has sudden starts of activity, hitting individual instances of corruption (Lockheed is a typical example) but which, not striking the system that engenders corruption, ultimately benefit the competitors of those investigated. In

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The response to the various anti-monopoly laws has been the unprecedented proliferation of private monopoly power. The truth is that even in the past (and even more so today with the multinationalization of the economy) capital has held a lethal weapon against which there is no response (in the system): the boycott of investments.[62] Given this situation, either the way is opened for the collectivization of the economy (which need not be incompatible with democratic freedoms) and workers' planning (with the aim of superseding the market, property and profits) or else nothing is resolved. In the present system the monopolies (multinational corporations) control the state and it cannot be otherwise.

Maldague propounds planning, but it is clear that without controlling those who dominate the economy there can be no serious planning. Nor is there much new in his proposals: the tools of planning (incentives and contracts) have been widely used in Italy and France, and they have failed since they were subject to the anarchic logic of the market. At any rate, Maldague's plan does not entirely exclude the strengthening of the market[63] and private enterprises, to which it proposes to delegate public activities. Public authorities, it claims, "could entrust certain duties to private enterprises which, through subsidization and the granting of a concession, agree to respect very definite guidelines approved by the public authorities. In short, they could transfer some duties to privately owned corporations working with public capital, which have greater flexibility in the management of their business."[64] In other words, no questions are raised about the failure of enterprises with private ownership and public capital, i.e., about the fact that, operating in a market dominated by the profit motive, these enterprises have become *de facto* private enterprises. To complicate matters, the Maldague plan proposes to increase their numbers and to make their undertakings completely private. The state, which in a

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order to give some idea of the extent of encroachment of the large U.S. monopolies (i.e., the fact that they utilize political power) we will cite only one episode: from the U.S. Congressional investigation of the Seven Sisters (January, 1974) it was discovered that the American government itself was advising them as to the best method for defrauding the national treasury. See F. Ippolito and F. Simen, *La Questione Energetica* (Milan, 1975), pp. 52-52. After this extraordinary discovery nothing seriously undermining the power of the "Big Seven" occurred. In reality, when monopolies are strong, their power of blackmailing the state is such that the law is not equal for everyone, and in the case of the "Big Seven" this power is enormous even in regards to the American government (see my "The Oil Crisis," *op.cit.*, p. 17).

62. Therefore, when state policies clash with unchangeable aspects of the system, such is the power of the large corporations that it is enough only to threaten such a boycott to curb the desire for reform. In Italy a few threatening allusions by some exponents of the managerial world was sufficient to ditch the De Gregorio reform project and to water down and then lay aside the disincentive standards for investments in the North. On the level of the Common Market the application of the anti-monopoly clauses of the treaty has been as instrumentalized as ever (see P. Picone, "Origine ed Evoluzione delle Regole di Concorrenza Comunitare: l'Apologia del Mercato 'Sociale' Europeo," in *Critica del Diritto,* no. 1, p. 69ff).

63. In the above cited interview in *Economia*, Maldague claims: "The necessity for elastic planning is evident then. It does not exclude a revitalization of the market system where it is necessary" (p. 54).

64. Cf. "Rapporto CEE sull'Inflazione," *op.cit.*, p. 24.

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market economy cannot even control enterprises with private ownership and public capital, should be able to control completely private enterprises, to whom they entrust the performance of one of their own duties. Behind Maldague's planning lurks the specter of the privatization of public activities.

Additional objections can be made to Maldague's report concerning self-management, egalitarianism, industrial democracy and the overcoming of alienation. Is it realistic to speak of self-management under private enterprise? If Fiat belongs to Agnelli and Qadafi, then workers cannot self-manage it.[65] If at the top of society there are enormous concentrations of wealth in private hands (multinantional corporations), then the equal distribution of income is a dream: a society with Rockefeller on the one hand and manual workers on the other can be egalitarian only in the Maldague report.

By now it is hardly worthwhile to point out how absurd it is to propose, within a capitalist context, the diffusion of technology, reduction of the work week, and more employment. Under capitalism, the use of very expensive technologies does not make sense if it does not increase profits and decrease costs; and decreasing costs for capital means increasing productivity, i.e., producing more with a smaller work-force. Requesting capital to invest more, asking it not to recover its labor costs but to increase them, is something which does not make sense in terms of profit.

The authors of the report do take into account the absurdity of asking capital to utilize expensive technologies without recovering labor costs. "It is necessary to consider, as a chief means for attaining new development goals, the creation of jobs in those sectors not requiring significant preliminary investments."[66] In other words, they advocate development with labor-intensive technologies demanding little capital. That, however, would generate an archaic and not very competitive industrial apparatus, so that seven pages later a worldwide technological development is proposed, embracing even the small- and medium-sized enterprises that are now excluded. Advanced technologies, however, are capital-intensive and labor-saving.

In conclusion, the report makes two contradictory and incompatible proposals: one advocates the diffusion of technology and at the same time of employment (an absurdity under monopoly capital); the other instead

65. Clearly, one can self-manage what one possesses, not the property of others. It could be, however, that the Maldague commission used the term "self-management" to indicate the German "cooperative management" (also ambiguously anticipated by our own Constitution), a manifestly disastrous experience, because it seeks to reconcile irreconciliable interests (property and labor) and moreover in a framework dominated by property. The result is only an attempt at the subaltern integration of the working class (far from industrial democracy). In this regard, see P. Rolle, *Sociologia del Lavoro* (Bologna, 1974), p. 175ff. and A. Carlo, "Alternativa Socialista e Transizione al Socialismo," in *Basilicata*, n. 1-2, 1976, p. 16. On recent tendencies toward the reform of cooperative management in Germany see in a highly (and justly) critical fashion W. Daubler, "La Cogestion en los Organos de la Republica Federal Alemana," in *Revista de Politica Social*, n. 111, p. 5ff. and M.J. Borrell, "La Nuova Legge Tedesca sulla Cogestione Operaia nelle Grande Imprese," in *Rivista di Diritto Commericale*, n. 1, 1976, p. 139ff.

66. Cf. "Rapporto CEE sull'Inflazione," *op, cit.*, p. 20.

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advocates the Chinese model of high labor intensity with few tools. Both should be compatible within the context of the same politico-economic program as qualifications of an identical (*sic*!) development model that comprehends everything as well as its opposite.

The Battle of Inflation

The Maldague report has to be rejected along with its hidden ideology outlined in its opening statement, to the effect that inflation "distorts measurements of economic calculations and impairs the ability of private and public operators to organize their activity rationally."[67] According to the report, inflation hits everyone, beyond the momentary advantage that some (multinational corporations) can derive from it. From this follows an appeal to everyone, cutting across class lines, to cooperate for the stability of the economic structure. In reality, this is not how things are: the battle of inflation has its victors and its vanquished. Defeated (or at least seriously injured), the labor movement is forced to a tiring chase of rising prices while in the long run real wages grow less than does productivity; the non-working lower classes are kept from any access to compensation from capital; and the very bourgeois state that sees the growing need for fiscal revenues is forced to adopt an unpopular policy of increased taxation, creating explosive socio-political problems, undermining its political and consensual base, thus becoming weaker and more susceptible to blackmail (e.g., from large multinational corporations). Also defeated are small, non-monopolistic proprietors who confront rising costs of the money they need and of the installations that eventually they have to purchase. Monopoly capital is the only victor, whose increase in operating costs are more than compensated by the advantages of inflation. Although big capital also confronts the problem of increased costs, it can rapidly recover by manipulating the prices it controls.[68]

Moreover, unlike small- and medium-sized enterprises, big capital is always able to secure financing under favorable terms in order to cope with increased costs because of its ties with the banking system of which it is a privileged client. If all else fails, it has recourse to the state, by threatening to close down plants which, because of their size, would generate a socio-political crisis that no state could bear. Thus, even when the working class recovers everything on the level of wages, monopoly capital can withstand inflation and can protect its rate of profit almost automatically.

Obviously, inflation creates a crisis. But for monopoly capital, the only real crisis is the decline in the rate of profit. The conduct of the "Seven Sisters" is indicative: when they became aware that it was no longer possible to protect

67. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

68. See my "The Oil Crisis," *op. cit.*, p. 22. For example, the Shah recently noted that the cost of a chemical plant with advanced technology (produced by firms employing refined capital-intensive technologies, i.e., large corporations) had gone from 1 to 1.8 billion dollars in one year. This is the manufacturing industry's response to the increase in oil prices.

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the rate of profit with the old prices, they entered into an agreement with the OPEC countries for a drastic price increase, although their studies must have predicted the upheavals resulting from such a rapid shift of wealth.[69]

From this perspective, it does not make sense to ask which is the main enemy, inflation or unemployment, and which to confront first. By stifling consumption and demand, inflation leads to stagnation of production and to unemployment[70] and the latter, by generating further stagnation of demand, gives rise in a second phase to the tendency for monopolies to recover by increasing prices. The phenomenon is circular: it is a matter of two strictly correlated aspects of the present-day dynamic of capitalism. A protracted deflationary policy would force monopolies to increase prices in order to protect a rate of profit jeopardized by stagnating production. A generous spending policy could stimulate investments but, since they produce very little employment, market demand could not "cover" new production. From this would follow new price increases to defend profit levels, with the consequent stifling of demand, stagnation, unemployment, etc. This is a bleak outlook, but it is the economic outlook of advanced countries. By now, the rates of inflation and unemployment are high everywhere[71]—levels that would have been considered very serious in the 1960s but which are now accepted as routine.

Given the perverse circularity of the process, it is useless to seek the

69. *Ibid.*, p. 9ff. It should not be objected that after the price revolution the OPEC gentlemen showed considerable prudence, in contrast to their previously bullish policy. Indeed, they are also heads of state of underdeveloped countries which are not in any condition to absorb the immense amount of petro-dollars they take in. The larger part of these dollars returns to the West as investments in large Western industries. Thus, their interests as oil monopolists must be tempered by their relatively new interests as partners in capitalist industrialist monopolies. But as partners in large Western industry the OPEC gentlemen participate in the recovery of Western industry through inflation. This is not *per se* new: if the monopolist owning firm A, producing goods purchased by industry B, becomes a shareholder in B, he can no longer indiscriminately raise the price of goods produced by A and purchased by B, otherwise he would lose on the one hand what he gains with the other. The problem is to temper various egoistic interests, although he certainly does not become interested in a global reduction in the prices level which, being ultimately shifted on to consumers, have to rise because that is the most profitable solution. It is only a matter of knowing which price has to lead the inflationary spiral from time to time. Yesterday it was the price of oil, today when the sheiks have become industrial partners, petroleum prices are relatively stable and those of industry spearhead the inflationary spiral.

70. The main difference from past crises having a different dynamic (net drops in accumulation and prices with a corresponding drop in production and employment) is evidenced precisely by the maintenance and increase in prices which, protecting accumulation, prevent crashes such as that of 1929 (in regards to both production and employment). Nevertheless, even if there is no crash there is endemic stagnation resulting in the continuous reduction of employment. From the great crash one goes on to a muffled and creeping crisis (with brief and asphyxiated moments of rebound) whose prolongation does not exclude another 1929-type spectacular crash in the future, as a consequence of a slower deterioration of the economy. Moreover, the situation in regard to inflation is very serious on a worldwide level and the successful levelling of 1976 is more apparent than real (see the anonymous article "Mobilitation Générale contre l'Inflation," *L'Année Economique et Sociale, op.cit.*, pp. 19-20).

71. The only notable partial exception is constituted by Switzerland which, however, has shifted its contradictions on to other countries by laying off immigrants. The stability of prices has been paid for by a serious recession and one can readily predict that if there is no recovery in the more or less immediate future capital will have no choice but to recoup by raising them.

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beginning of the circle; the circle itself enters into the discussion, i.e., the model of capitalist accumulation which produces both unemployment as well as inflation. Capitalist accumulation is the main enemy, and it raises the problem of a transition to a radically different type of economy: socialism. This does not mean falling into abstract maximalism: inflation is an everyday occurrence and must be confronted. It is no longer only a matter of catching up (through wages) with prices, but rather of stopping the phenomenon at its source, preventing the inflationary spiral from freely unfolding. It means asking concrete questions about prices (not the general raising of dust against the high cost of living), but specific questions about specific prices and challenging the power of monopolies.

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FROMM'S THEORY OF RELIGION

by Rudolf J. Siebert

Erich Fromm has been criticized by his former colleagues at the Frankfurt Institute for having philosophically idealist theories, advising conformity to present capitalist society, and paying only lip service to social criticism. But an analysis of his theory of religion shows that it is not only faithful to the essential elements of critical social theory but that it culminates in the very foundation of critical theory: negative theology.[1] As with the theories of Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse, Fromm's theory of religion is intended for those people in the twentieth century who no longer ascribe to theistic religions and for whom the crucial question is whether conversion to a humanistic "religiosity" without the dogmas and institutions of positive religions is possible. According to Fromm, these people are not merely confronted with the choice between selfish bourgeois materialism and the Christian concepts of God, Trinity and Incarnation.

Born into a religious Jewish family in Frankfurt in 1900, Fromm recalls in his autobiography that the writings of the Old Testament touched and exhilarated him as a boy more than anything else he was exposed to.[2] Fromm was particularly moved by the prophetic writings of Isaiah, Amos and Hosea, with their vision of the last days in which universal peace and harmony would reign. This prophetic promise appealed to the adolescent Fromm especially as he experienced minor episodes of anti-semitism and the exclusionary clannishness of the Christians as well as the Jews. But the autobiographer believes that these experiences would not have impressed him so deeply had it not been for World War I.[3] As most 14-year-olds, Fromm was caught up in the intital excitement of war, the celebrations of early victories and the reports of the tragic deaths of individual soldiers. But by the war's end, young Fromm was seriously troubled by the question of what made war possible.

Having become deeply suspicious of all official religious or secular ideologies, Fromm gave up the outward form of his Jewish orthodoxy in 1926.

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*Edited by Mark Nielson.

1. See Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination* (Boston, 1973), p. 200; Max Horkheimer, *Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen* (Hamburg, 1970), pp. 54-89; Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory* (New York, 1972), pp. 129-131.
2. Erich Fromm, *Beyond the Chains of Illusion* (New York, 1962), p. 5.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

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In his search for an understanding of the irrationality of human mass behavior, he followed a path that led him to Hegel, Marx and Freud.[4] Blending empirical observation and Hegel's logic, Fromm revised both Marx's theory of society and Freud's theory of the individual and finally integrated them in *The Dogma of Christ*, published in 1930. Here he set forth his theory of religion as well as the essence of his critical theory of society. In this first attempt to transcend the customary psychologistic approach to historical and social phenomena, Fromm employed traditional psychoanalytic methodology to show that ideas and ideologies can be understood only by comprehending the real life conditions of the people who create them and believe in them.

The roots of Fromm's theory of religion are to be found not only in Marx and Freud but in the bourgeois enlightenment as well. As described by Hegel in the introduction to his philosophy of religion, enlightened bourgeois thought held that the knowledge of God could not be posited by the comprehending reason. Consciousness of God could arise only from feeling. Hegel is amazed that enlightenment thinkers continued to attribute any objectivity to God. More consistent, he believed, were the materialist or positivist theorists who reduced human thought and spirit to sensation, and identified God as a product of feeling and therefore without objectivity. But against both views, Hegel argued that the bourgeoisie had reified and privatized God into individual property. What was rooted merely in feeling existed only for the individual as his property, but not on its own. Hegel believed that any philosophy of religion was first of all under the obligation to prove that God exists.[5]

Fromm, as most materialists in Hegel's time, considers God a product of human feeling without any independent existence. While for Hegel neither God nor people could be understood in isolation from each other, Fromm is confident that he can speak about people without reference to God. Whereas for Hegel, the foundation of religion was the dialectical relation between God's absolute spirit and human subjective spirit, for Fromm it is the individual's relation toward a wholly indeterminate X-reality.[6] Hegel felt that the philosopher of religion at least had to establish the independent necessity of religion, if not of God. Only after he left the Frankfurt Institute in 1939 did Fromm go beyond religion's external, instrumental and functional necessity as an integrative social factor.[7] In the past three and a half decades, he has increasingly emphasized an internal personal necessity of a humanistic religiousness.

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4. During 1929, Fromm was introduced to the leading intellectuals of the Frankfurt Institute: Marcuse, Adorno and Horkheimer, the Institute's second director. For the next decade Fromm was part of the Institute, contributing directly to its critical social theory.

5. G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion* (Stuttgart, 1965), vol. I, p. 68.

6. Erich Fromm, *You Shall Be as Gods* (New York, 1966), pp. 56-62; Erich Fromm, *The Heart of Man* (New York, 1964), chapter 6.

7. See Erich Fromm, *The Dogma of Christ and Other Essays* (New York, 1963), pp. 11-21;

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Fromm derives his critique of religion from Marx's claim that man makes religion, and not religion man.[8] According to Marx, religion represents an unreal world consciousness because it is a reflection of the false relations of state, society and family. Since the human essence lacks real objectifications, it seeks realization through fantasy in religion. Only by unmasking this fantastical self-realization for the sham that it is does Marx believe the philosopher can begin the critique of politics and social relations. For Fromm, Marx's work is the secular manifestation of the radical humanism expressed in the vision of the Old Testament prophets and the key to history. As in Marx's theory of religion, it is Fromm's intent to disillusion people so that they may come to their senses and think, act and change their reality.

Yet, critical theory developed partly because the German and European proletariat resisted such disillusionment and was reluctant to fulfill its historical revolutionary role. In Freud, Fromm found an explanation for the peculiar tenacity of religious ideas. According to Freud, primitive religion arises out of the need to personify the forces of nature in order for humans to react to them and overcome the feeling of complete helplessness. Even with the advent of a scientific understanding of nature, humanity's sense of helplessness remains, along with the longing for protection and Gods. Man's situation *vis-à-vis* nature, in Freud's view, is only the continuation of an infantile prototype. As small children, men find themselves in a state of helplessness in relation to their parents, whom they have reason to fear—especially their fathers—yet they are certain the fathers will protect them against the dangers of the outside world. With science, natural forces lose their human traits, but people still need to cling to the existence of a father, one more powerful than the biological one. Freud argued that the strength of religious ideas was due entirely to the power of humanity's oldest and strongest wishes and fears.

Fromm's concept of social character, introduced in *The Dogma of Christ* and later empirically verified in the Frankfurt Labor Study of 1931,[9] mediates between Marx's notion of social reality and Freud's understanding of

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"Ueber Methode und Aufgabe einer analytischen Sozialpsychologie," in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, vol. I (1931), pp. 28-54; "Die psychoanalitische Characterologie und ihre Bedeutung für die Sozialpsychologie," in *ibid.*, vol. 3 (1932), pp. 253-277; "Review of Otto Heller, *Der Untergang des Judentums*," *ibid.*, pp. 438-439; "Robert Briffault's Werk über das Mutterrecht," *ibid.*, (1933), pp. 382-387; "Die sozialpsychologische Bedeutung der Mutterrechtstheorie," *ibid.* (1934), pp. 196-227; "Die gesellschaftliche Bedingtheit der psychoanalytischen Therapie," *ibid.* (1935), pp. 365-398; "Sozialpsychologischer Feil," in Max Horkheimer, ed., *Studien über Autorität und Familie* (Paris, 1936), pp. 77-135; "Zu Gefühl der Ohnmacht," *ibid.* (1937), pp. 95-117; "The Social Psychology of 'Will Therapy'," *Psychiatry* (May, 1939), pp. 229-237.

8. Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'," in *Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right,'* Joseph O'Malley, ed. (Cambridge, 1970), p. 131; Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (New York, 1957), part I; Karl Marx, "Die deutsche Ideologie," in *Die Frühschriften* (Stuttgart, 1953), pp. 339-341.

9. The Frankfurt Labor Study grew out of the conviction of Horkheimer and his colleagues that the National Socialists would probably take power and that the revolutionary workers would

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individual psychology. Character structure, shaped by socio-economic reality, determines not only what ideas one will choose, but also their strength.[10] Further, Fromm argues that once created, the ideas influence social character and thereby the socio-economic structure.[11] As in Hegel's dialectic, Fromm's middle term, social character, becomes more important than ideas or the socio-economic structure. This dialectical configuration gives his theory immediacy, empirical concreteness and humanistic warmth, but it leaves him open to his critics' charge that he psychologizes the family, state and history, and thereby promotes the adjustment of the individual to an antagonistic social reality.[12] Fromm could have strengthened his analysis by showing how ideas mediate between social character and socio-economic reality and how, in turn, socio-economic structures mediate between ideas and social character.

In the peculiar stratification of class society, Fromm sees the infantile situation repeated for the individual. The individual at once fears the ruling minority while longing for the protection it affords. And everyone knows that resistance to that minority is always severely punished. Just as the child uncritically believes everything the father says, so does the individual accept whatever the ruling class or its political representatives decree. This infantile

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rise up against Hitler and the magnates of industry and finance backing him. Although never satisfactorily completed, this study of the mentality of German workers was the first real effort of the Frankfurt Institute to apply critical theory to a concrete problem. Directed by Fromm, the study consisted of approximately 3000 questionnaires asking workers their views on such issues as education of children, the rationalizatoin of industry, the possibility of avoiding a new war and the locus of real power in civil society and state. Fromm wanted to ascertain the level of opposition to Hitler among German workers. The premise of the study was that only those opinions rooted in the character structure of a person became convictions a person would be willing to fight for. The method was to examine individually formulated answers to the open-ended interpretive questionnaire and interpret their unintended, unconscious meanings. If, for example, a worker answered the question: "Which men in history do you admire most?" by saying "Alexander the Great, Caesar, Napoleon, Marx and Lenin," Fromm interpreted the answer to be authoritarian, since the respondent admired dictators and military leaders. Were the answer "Socrates, Pasteur, Kant, Marx and Lenin," Fromm classified the worker as democratic-revolutionary because of the admiration shown for benefactors of humankind and not people with power.

The result of Fromm's study was that roughly ten per cent of the German workers had what critical theorists would call from that time on an authoritarian character structure, about fifteen per cent had a democratic-revolutionary character, and about seventy-five per cent had a mixture of the two character structures. This characterology was used by Adorno in his *Authoritarian Personality* and later again by Fromm in *Social Character in a Mexican Village*. Although never published because, so Fromm contends, he and Horkheimer differed over the value of the work, the questionnaire developed in the Frankfurt Labor Study was incorporated into the Institute's *Studies on Authority and Family* (1936). For further discussion, see Jay, *op.cit.*; Horkheimer, *Critical Theory*, *op.cit.*; and Fromm, "The Revolutionary Character," in *The Dogma of Christ*, *op.cit.*

10. Fromm, "The Revolutionary Character," *op.cit.*, p. 148.

11. Erich Fromm, "The Application of Humanist Psychoanalysis to Marx's Theory," in *Socialist Humanism* (Garden City, 1966), pp. 233-234.

12. Jay, *Dialectical Imagination*, *op.cit.*, pp. 222, 229-230; Horkheimer, "Foreword" to Jay, *ibid.*, p. xii; Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (New York, 1962), pp. 217-251; Herbert Marcuse, "A Reply to Erich Fromm," in *Dissent*, 3:1 (Winter 1956), pp. 79-83.

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bondage of the masses, one of the main guarantees of social stability, cohesion and equilibrium, is maintained and strengthened by the power elite.[13] According to Fromm, one of the best ways of doing this is through authoritarian religion. The ruling class always claims God as its ally while religion itself intellectually intimidates the masses, making them distrust their own senses. Paradoxically, says Fromm, religion also offers people a certain measure of satisfaction, giving life a tolerable appearance to discourage them from attempting to change from obedient to rebellious children or from wage laborer to revolutionary.[14]

Fromm argues that the satisfaction religion offers are not those of ego drives such as self-preservation, better food or other material pleasures, but are libidinous satisfactions that occur in fantasy, especially collective fantasies.[15] By virtue of their universality, the masses' social fantasies are perceived as if they were real by the individual. According to Fromm, religious fantasies function to console men and women for life's privations, encourage them to accept their class status by appeal to their emotions, and to assuage the guilt feelings of the ruling class by justifying their oppression of the masses.[16]

The Dogma of Christ describes the psychic situation of the Christian proletariat in the first three centuries of the faith. Fromm seeks to understand the social effect of the primitive Christian message and the changes in the early Christians' idea of Jesus.[17] The first Christians were a brotherhood of the economically and socially oppressed held together by an enthusiastic hope and hatred. That hope sprang from the earliest Christian message: not a social or economic reform, but a promise of a not-distant future in which the poor would be rich, the hungry satisfied and the oppressed would gain authority. Not only is this hope expressed, but a hatred of the rich and powerful can also be seen in the Sermon on the Mount and the story of Lazarus.[18] In fact, Fromm sees this understandable hatred for the oppressors in society run throughout the Gospels and the Christian tradition up to the Constantinian turn when the Church makes peace with the Roman establishment in whose name Jesus had been crucified three centuries earlier.

Fromm finds the oldest teaching on Jesus's nature to be adoptionist, i.e., that Jesus was not the Son of God from the beginning but became so only by a definite act of God's will. This is "Left-Wing Christology" or Christology from below since it starts out from Jesus's humanity. In many respects, Left-Wing Christology resembles the concept, familiar to the Jewish masses for many centuries, of a Messiah chosen by God to introduce a kingdom of righteous-

13. Fromm, *The Dogma, op.cit.*, p. 16.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 16; Cf. Marx, "Contribution," *op.cit.*, pp. 131-132.
15. Fromm, *The Dogma, op.cit.*, p. 20.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 37.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 39. See also in the New Testament Luke 18: 18-25; Luke 16: 19-31; and James 5: 1-11 for further examples of the polemical message of Christianity against the rich.

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ness and love. But Fromm finds two new elements in the early Christian faith: that the Messiah is exalted as the Son of God and that, no longer the powerful military hero of Jewish tradition, the Messiah gains his significance and dignity from his suffering and death on the cross. Fromm argues that the adoptionist belief is a new form of the old myth of the rebellion of the son against the father. Not only did the Christian proletariat hate their earthly fathers, the ruling class, but they also detested the divine Father who was always portrayed as the ally of their mundane oppressors. The early Christians did not dare consciously slander the powerful Father-God, but instead expressed their unconscious hostility by putting a man at his side, thereby depriving him of his privileged and unreachable patriarchal position.[19] To Fromm, the adoptionist belief represents an unconscious wish for the removal not only of the divine Father but of earthly fathers as well.

The guilt these unconscious feelings generated was displaced by the figure of the suffering Messiah. In the first place, says Fromm, Christians identified with Jesus because he was a suffering human being like themselves. This identification then forms the basis for the fascinating power of the idea of the suffering man Jesus and its effect on the proletariat in the Roman Empire. Secondly, Christians shifted some of their death wishes against the Father to the Son. As in Hegel's view, Fromm sees the father killed in the son's crucifixion in the early Christian myth.[20] And thirdly, in their identification with the Son, Christians suffered death themselves, thereby atoning for their death wishes against their earthly and heavenly fathers.[21] The focus on the early Christian fantasy of the crucified son, according to Fromm, lies not in the Christians' masochistic expiation through self-annihilation, but in the displacement of the Father by the suffering Jesus. Fromm sees in Christianity the end of religion and the beginning of humanism because for the first time a man has moved into the X-dimension, previously reserved for God.[22] In the third and fourth centuries, "Right-Wing Christology," or Christology from above—the doctrine that Jesus was always God—became popular in the Church, a trend which Fromm claims represented an elimination of hostility toward God and a legitimation of the power both of the Father and of the ruling class.[23]

Part of the psychic background of the belief in Christ was the cult of the Roman Emperor, which Fromm claims to have been closely related to monotheism in its belief in a powerful and righteous Father.[24] The hostility toward the Emperor and Roman authority were not unique to the Christian proletariat nor were those goals the ones they hoped for. But while the

19. Fromm, *The Dogma, op.cit.*, pp. 46-47.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 48; cf. also Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization, op.cit.*, pp. 63-66.
22. Erich Fromm, *To Have or to Be* (New York, 1976), pp. 53-65.
23. Fromm, *The Dogma, op.cit.*, pp. 50-91.
24. *The Dogma, op.cit.*, pp. 48-49; cf. also Horkheimer, *Die Sehnsucht, op.cit.*, pp. 63-64.

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non-Christian masses tried to realize their wishes through political praxis, the hopelessness of that path led the Christians to seek fulfillment of their wishes in fantasy. Hegel, to the contrary, argued that in the principle of subjective freedom—that the individual is of infinite value and destined to the highest freedom—can be found a revolutionary element, one that was a contributing factor to the final downfall of the Roman Empire.

Hegel emphasized that the validity of the society and of the state, as well as alienated human beings, will die with Jesus's death. What in the Romans' mind was the worst disgrace—crucifixion as a criminal—was transformed into the highest honor, shaking all the bonds of human life in the process. Having no substantial claim on the Christian, the status quo could resort only to the application of the completely external force of the death penalty to gain allegiance. But since they believed in eternal life, Christians no longer shied away from death, and so the Empire lost its last weapon against the faith. Furthermore, that God dies, that the negation of everything is found even in God, is a most terrifying thought for Hegel. But, he argues, in the resurrection and ascension of Christ, God retains identity in the non-identity of death. For the early Christians that liquidation of the negative and the elevation of a man into heaven represented the highest verification of human value. For Hegel, this verification is the foundation of all Christian humanism.

Fromm agrees that there is a revolutionary element in the death of Jesus, but doubts that it actually gave the world a different form, Christianity being more fantasy than effective factor for social change.[25] Nor does he find in Christianity the highest verification of human nature. For Fromm, God dies and there is no resurrection, and in that is to be found humanity's ultimate liberation. Accepting the principle of subjective freedom, Fromm believes that human powers alone give value to life, not the fact that people are the objects of divine love. While steadfastly believing in the possibility of humanism without God, Fromm has since *The Dogma of Christ* developed his critical theory of religion by recourse to the anthropological basis of Hegel's philosophy of religion: the disunity between immediate human existence and its mediate essence.[26]

Fromm defines human essence as a contradiction inhering in human existence.[27] On the one hand, we are animals, and on the other, since we are conscious, we cannot be one with nature, as animals can. This is the classical view, shared by Hegel, that humans are body and soul, angel and animal. Neither for Fromm nor for Hegel is the awareness of human limitations the subjective basis for religious consciousness. Rather, that awareness is the key to human transcendence of limitations through the development of freedom.

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25. *The Dogma,* pp. 21-49.
26. Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society* (New York, 1955), chapters 1-3, 8; cf. also Fromm, *The Heart, op.cit.,* pp. 116-118.
27. Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York, 1967), pp. 1-83; *The Heart,* p. 116.

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In Hegel's view, a person's feeling of limitation is a comparison of one's nature with one's existence at this particular time in history. Immediate existence seems inappropriate, in conflict with human essence. Fromm points out that not only is human essence a contradiction, but it is also one that demands a resolution. Both Fromm and Hegel see in the search for such a resolution the dynamic source for the world's positive religions: how can people find relief from this inner tension and be at home in the world?[28]

Fromm claims that there is a progressive as well as a regressive resolution. The latter is exemplified by the attempt of primitive religion or severe psychopathology to do away with what makes us human—reason, freedom and self-awareness—and merge back into nature.[29] In civil society, regressive self-reconciliation takes place in the form of fascism.[30] The alternative is to find harmony through full development of all human productive and creative capabilities.[31] According to Fromm, the progressive solution surfaced in the monotheistic teachings of Moses around 1350 B.C. The same idea was expressed in other times and cultures: by Lao-tse in China, Buddha in India, Zarathustra in Persia and in Israel by Jeremiah and Isaiah. Whatever the form of this message, the idea was the same: to answer the question of life by becoming fully human. But in Fromm's view, this message of reconciliation is perverted and falsified as soon as people hear it for they immediately idolize and ideologize God.[32] Fromm's theory of religion is an attempt to motivate people to return to the authentic search for inner harmony. He does this in the context of negative theology.[33]

The core of negative theology is that God is unknown—an idea that, according to Horkheimer, had its origins in Judaism.[34] In his work *You Shall Be as Gods* (1966), Fromm traces the development of the concept of God in the Old Testament and later Jewish tradition. Formulated over a period of 1200 years, what is common to the idea of God in the Old Testament is that ultimate reality, or the highest value, can be found neither in nature nor in human history. Rather, only the *One* represents supreme value and the final goal of humanity.[35] Fromm sees three stages in the evolution of this concept: first, God is visualized an absolute ruler who can arbitrarily destroy what he has created; second, in the Noah story, God makes a convenant with humanity, a step which prepares the way to complete human freedom, even from God; and third, to Moses God is revealed as the God of History rather

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28. Horkheimer, *Critical Theory, op.cit.*, p. 129.
29. Fromm, *The Heart,* p. 118; cf. also Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (New York, 1970), chapter 5.
30. Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (New York, 1973), chapter 13; *The Heart,* p. 118; *Escape from Freedom,* chapter 6.
31. *The Heart,* pp. 118-119.
32. *Ibid.,* p. 119.
33. Fromm, *You Shall Be as Gods, op.cit.*, chapter 2.
34. Horkheimer, *Die Sehnsucht, op.cit.*, pp. 57-59.
35. Fromm, *You Shall Be as Gods,* p. 22.

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than the God of nature.[36] In that event, Fromm sees the most important distinction between God and idols: only idols have names, while Moses's God of history is nameless. According to Fromm, this uniquely Jewish prohibition against representations of God, expressed in the Second Commandment, finds its most advanced and radical formulation in the negative theology of Moses Maimonides in the Middle Ages.[37]

Fromm concludes by saying that in the Jewish view the only thing that matters is that God *is*.[38] Since Jewish scholars attach little importance to speculation about God's nature, Judaism has not had a theological development comparable to that of Christianity. Rather, Jewish theology has always been a negative one in that the acknowledgement of God is fundamentally the negation of idols. Fromm's critical theory of religion, then, insofar as it is a negation of idols, is essentially negative theology. For Fromm, the history of humankind is the history of idol worship: from primitive idols of clay and wood against which the Jewish prophets fought, to the modern idols of the state—the leader, production and consumption, sex, car and career.

Fromm argues that negative theology can show that as an alienated individual is necessarily an idol worshipper since by transferring living powers onto an external thing the self must worship the thing in order to retain a measure of self-awareness.[39] In worshipping the idol, a person worships a limited, partial aspect of the self, limiting the self to that aspect and ceasing to grow. While the idol represents only an isolated part of the person, God stands for the totality. Therefore, one who tries to be like God approaches his or her own totality—the full development of one's creative powers.

According to Fromm, late medieval culture flourished because people followed the vision of the *City of God*. Modern civil society bloomed because people were energized by the vision of the growth of the *Earthly City of Progress*. In twentieth century advanced or organized capitalist society, however, this vision deteriorated to that of the *Tower of Babel*, which is now beginning to collapse and which will ultimately bury everyone in its ruins. If the *City of God* and the *Earthly City* were thesis and antithesis, then a new synthesis is the only alternative to chaos, barbarism and death: the synthesis between the spiritual core of the late medieval world and the development of rational thought and science since the Renaissance. In Fromm's vision, this synthesis is the *City of Being*. Fromm's critical theory of religion is from its very beginning in the *Dogma of Christ*, 46 years ago in Frankfurt, to its conclusion in his latest book, *To Have or to Be*, entirely devoted to the coming of this life-friendly *City of Being*. Throughout his life, Fromm has worked against the actualization of alternative Future I—the totally

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-32.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

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administered, technocratic, automated, and bureaucratic society and against alternative Future II—escalating wars and nuclear holocaust, and toward the alternative Future III—the reconciled, rational and free society.[40]

Behind non-believing Jews such as Fromm, Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse—searching today for a new meaning of human existence—rises a 3000 year history of faith of an intensity without comparison in world history, be it in relation to the faith itself or to the many attempts to liquidate it.[41] From Fromm's critical theory of religion, it is obvious that the thorn of being chosen has bored itself deeply into the Jewish flesh, whether Jews try to rebel against this determination, repress it or transform it into the program of a non-theistic dialectical anthropology and eschatology, anticipating the City of Being, the humanistic society. Fromm's theory is mainly a critique of ideology—the justification of unjust relations, false consciousness, necessary appearance, untruth—but something remains of religion after it is de-ideologized: the X-experience and with it, the anticipation of the City of Being, the truly rational and free society. In reality, Fromm does not transcend the negative theology of Judaism, but rediscovers in it the polemical and revolutionary content it always had—perfect social justice.

40. *To Have or to Be, op.cit.*, p. 202; cf. also Ossip K. Flechtheim, *Futurologie. Der Kampf um die Zukunft* (Cologne, 1971), chapter 9, especially pp. 396-397.

41. Cf. Walter Strolz, "Sinnfragen nicht-glaubender Juden," *Frankfurter Hefte*, 31:3 (March 1976), pp. 25-34; cf. also Fromm, *The Heart*, chapter 4; *You Shall Be as Gods*, chapters 2-3; *To Have or to Be*, p. 202; and *You Shall Be as Gods*, pp. 53, 57, 61.

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NOTES AND COMMENTARY:

INTRODUCTION TO NEGT AND ZIPES

by Jay Rosellini

For quite some time, West Germany has been described in clichés. According to popular legend, this is a country whose "economic miracle" of the 1950s laid the groundwork for a stable, well-functioning democracy characterized by discipline and efficiency. As the main bulwark of the Atlantic alliance, the FRG is considered to be the most dependable representative of U.S. interests in Western Europe. Despite this status (or perhaps because of it), the U.S. press has consistently failed to provide more than superficial coverage of current events there, and little critical analysis has been forthcoming. Even during the recent wave of terrorist activity, few reports went beyond sensationalism or admiration for the "tough" stance taken by Chancellor Schmidt's government. It is high time to illuminate the more disquieting aspects of the West German system.

Public reaction to terrorism has demonstrated how fragile the democratic framework really is. In a witch hunt reminiscent of the McCarthy era, politicians and the mass media have joined in an effort to portray any critique of the state as support for terrorism. Even "respectable" bourgeois newspapers like the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* have printed editorials calling for the criminalization of merely "thinking" about terrorist acts. The word "sympathizer" has become the most common epithet, and the Christian Democratic Party has gone so far as to publish a "documentation" of quotes from various degrees of sympathizers. This publication is particularly significant, for the person who is most often cited is none other than Willy Brandt, chairman of the Social Democratic Party. As it turns out, there is a definite method in the "madness" gripping the FRG.

The forces of reaction are mounting a massive defamation campaign against all political groups to the left of "center," i.e., of the right. *Berufsverbot* (professional proscription), which has been used to exclude leftists from the civil service (including all teaching positions), is being utilized with increasing regularity against members of the SPD. Christian Democrats have also attempted to have all political parties to the left of the SPD declared unconstitutional. The long-range goal is clear: to eliminate all anti-capitalist opposition from the FRG political scene. As in the past, the fate of this scheme will depend to a great extent on the actions of the SPD. Since the turn of the century, the German Social Democrats have made an aura of legality and respectability their highest priority. The survival of the party has taken precedence over the need for social reform (or revolution). In the present situation, the right is clearly trying to force the SPD to divest itself of its left wing, which still considers capitalism as something to be overcome. In a country with such a firmly entrenched authoritarian tradition, the total destruction of the Left (which began with the suppression of grass-roots socialist movements in the late 1940s) could have ominous consequences.

In the present atmosphere of political repression, the intellectuals have been one of the main targets. A right-wing Christian Democrat went on television to denounce the "absolute critique of society" of the Frankfurt School as a major source of terrorist ideology. In his published reply, Jürgen Habermas pointed out parallels to the Nazi's aim of eliminating "critical humanistic thought." Writers who have dared to oppose the muckraking tactics of the rightist press, have been repeatedly denounced and even

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harassed by police. University faculty members have been subjected to such political intimidation as "supplemental" loyalty oaths, and the "reform" of university studies now being implemented, introduced the kind of academic regimentation which is antithetical to the cultivation of critical thinking. Seen against the background of the fate of German intellectuals in the 1930s, present developments should not be taken lightly.

The extent to which *existing* ultra-rightist groups pose a real threat remains a subject of debate. Public demonstrations by neo-Nazi groups have increased in recent years, and several incidents of defacement of graves in Jewish cemeteries have been reported. Reactionary student organizations—some of whom demand the return to the Reich boundaries of 1937— have also become more numerous. When Willy Brandt wrote an open letter to Chancellor Schmidt a few months ago criticizing the tolerance of the extreme Right, he was rebuked by several commentators (interior minister Maihofer dismissed the danger as minimal). The army has also been a major source of scandals during the last year: a group of junior officers was released from the service after their "symbolic burning" of Jews became known, and it was discovered that an officer in an elite unit was forcing his men to sing militaristic songs from the Nazi era. A Chilean army officer was even allowed to give a speech (praising Pinochet's putsch against Allende) at the officer academy in Hamburg.

The true significance of such incidents lies in their symptomatic nature: rather than coming to terms with the Nazi past, the FRG has effectively repressed it. (This is not surprising, given the fact that some of the most powerful figures in the economic sector had already exercised similar functions under Hitler; recent terrorist victim Hanns Martin Schleyer was, for example, a member of the SS who worked on economic planning.) In the educational system, fascism is treated cursorily, if at all. A documentation of pupils' essays on Hitler which appeared this year is an appalling illustration of this state of affairs: one pupil thought that the Führer had been Italian, one believed that he had built the Berlin wall, and one even said that he had gassed his "enemies," the Nazis! The lack of information in the classroom is being "compensated" for by enterprising publishers who are capitalizing on the present wave of popular interest in the Nazi period. The pseudo-scholarly journal *The Third Reich* was a great success (one cover photo depicted Hitler as the "man of the year" of 1938), as was the film "Hitler—a Career," made by Joachim Fest. Reacting to foreign criticism of such phenomena (mainly from France and Italy), Chancellor Schmidt denied that the "Nazi cult" is indicative of any basic trend. His assessment of the situation in West Gennany, namely that prosperity has brought with it tolerance and "pragmatic thinking," is extremely problematic: one might well ask what might happen if a severe crisis of capitalism suddenly destroyed present prosperity (there are already over one million unemployed in the FRG).

The strengthening of state power (dozens of new laws on internal security were passed during the last decade), the questionable legal practices in connection with the terrorist trial in Stammheim (including the bugging of conversations between the defendants and their attorneys), the mysterious "suicides" of the convicted terrorists and the general trend toward the limiting of civil liberties have moved many observers to ask whether democracy is being systematically "dismantled" in West Germany. The following articles by Oskar Negt and Jack Zipes are an attempt to come to grips with this question. Negt traces the long-standing role of the German state in suppressing emancipatory movements and relates this to the present situation in the FRG, and Zipes provides a detailed analysis of the mechanics of political repression in operation today.

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THE MISERY OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY IN GERMANY

by Oskar Negt*

Now, after the almost forgotten revolutionary student movement of the sixties—a movement which had some impact on the views and attitudes of liberal circles—the West German social climate must be seen in terms of a restoration. The effects of the anti-radical legislation (*Radikalenerlass*) in the civil service, political parties, churches and unions are only the tip of the iceberg. Even more significant are the numerous unpublicized but extremely important constitutional changes as well as the shift from formal legality to "reasons of state." An extreme polarization of social forces renders this restoration different from that of the first post-war period. It would be false to assume, however, that the Left is weaker today than it was twenty years ago. On the contrary, it is significantly stronger.

The anti-extremist hysteria, resulting partially from the fact that some of its instigators have become the target of its consequences, clearly points to the political strategy uniting the often disparate and sometimes contradictory particular causes. As the liberal Constantin Frantz said almost a century ago, the "German question is the hardest knot to untie and the most difficult problem for European nations." Today, this question takes on a new significance for there has always been a tendency for revolutions to fail and restorations to succeed in Germany.[1]

Why are there so many restorations in German history? One answer, although not entirely satisfactory, is that a victorious German revolution has never been concretely experienced or embedded in the popular traditions, national awareness or collective social consciousness.

La Marseillaise, the martial anthem of the French Revolution, is still sung today by French workers and middle-class citizens, and July 14 remains a French working class holiday. On the other hand, the German national anthem is not the celebration of a collective struggle, but rather of the individual longing for unity and freedom. It compensates, if only musically, for the political restoration from which it originated.

The second restoration of the Federal Republic cannot be explained only by the immediate context of long-term economic crisis. In a country in which nothing has been as constant as social catastrophes for the last sixty years, where no autonomous attempt at liberation from exploitation and repression has ever been successful and where even the present parliamentary democracy is the result of a military defeat that allowed no other alternative—in such a country, history affects everyday reality. That the German middle class lacks any revolutionary traditions of its own, from which it could have acquired its identity in the struggle for democratic freedoms, casts some light on the current conservative trend (which is no more than a form of preventive, deterrent counterrevolution). This trend has political and ideological precursors reaching far back into the German past.

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*This is a slightly abridged version of an essay originally published in Oskar Negt, *Kein Sozialismus ohne Demokratie* (Frankfurt, 1976), pp. 12-46. Translated by David J. Parent.

1. In Germany, "restoration" in political usage does not at all have the negative connotation associated with this word in countries with revolutionary traditions. "Restoration is the re-establishment of a government which has been destroyed by civil wars, by enemy occupation or other causes..." *Vollständiges politisches Taschenwörterbuch* (Leipzig, 1849).

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The Deflected Concept of Revolution in Literature and Philosophy

By assuming that the essential factors of cultural production in Germany consist of theoretical efforts to master the German bourgeoisie's constitutional difficulties, one can see that the contradictions evoked by the unachieved political emancipation of the bourgeois class suffuse the essential forms and processes of its theoretical development. A few literary examples will clarify this assumption.

Martin Luther, who is heralded as an uncompromising free thinker, expresses the deflection of this phenomenon in its very origins. He depicts the great peasants' revolution, which sought to restore the traditional rights of the peasantry that had long been violated by the princes and the corrupt Church, as a pack of wild mobs led and misled by religious fanatics. As long as he was dealing with the "mad rage" of the Roman clergy, Luther was able to give "absolutely no better advice and no more effective remedy than for kings and princes to intervene forcibly, to mobilize and attack these dangerous people who would poison all the world and to put an end to the whole story with weapons, not with words. As we punish thieves with the sword, murderers with the noose, heretics with fire, why do we not attack all the more these harmful teachers of ruin, such as popes, cardinals, bishops and the entire swarm of the Roman Sodom and wash our hands in their blood?"[2] But when he sees the spreading conflagration and senses that the unity of word and weapon is precisely what threatened to unite the scattered peasant revolts, country pastors, tradesmen and urban proletarian strata into a single front with the economically destitute lower nobility, Luther shrinks back. This man, who had taught countless lay preachers to read the Bible in their own language and on whom the peasants had initially set their hopes, now gives the nobility and governmental authorities an ecclesiastical permit to exterminate the peasants in retaliation. "Whoever can should smash, choke and stab them, secretly and publicly, like killing a mad dog! . . . We should pray for them to obey; if not, there's no call for much mercy. Just fire away at them with your guns, otherwise they'll do it a thousand times worse."[3]

The revolution, which had engulfed the peasants and the entire country decades before Luther and which, given added impetus by the Reformation could no longer be limited to theological matters, appeared to the masses as the expression of liberation from *all* repression and exploitation by both the bishops and the princes. Thomas Münzer, Luther's best pupil, knew it was a question of the people's just cause and that words and weapons cannot be divided between good and evil enemies once those enemies are armed. Franz von Sickingen's Ebernburg was the center of the nobles' conspiracy against the clergy and the princes. Luther's reply to an invitation to meet with Hutten and Sickingen at the Ebernburg to discuss the continuing struggle is quoted in his January 16, 1521, message to Spalatin: "I do not want the Gospel to be defended by violence and bloodshed. By the word the world is overcome, by the word the Church is preserved, by the word it will also be restored, and Anti-Christ, who took what he has without violence, will also fall without violence."

So Luther reverts to the power of the word. The miserable history of German revolutions and restorations begins with the failure of the Peasants' Revolt, and Luther

2. Cited from *Epitoma responsionis ad Martinum Luther.* Excerpt (1520).

3. Luther's letter to Johann Rühel, May 30, 1525. On Luther's stance toward the Peasants War, cf. the most important analysis of the Peasants' War: Wilhelm Zimmermann, *Der grosse deutsche Bauernkrieg* (1841), new edition: (Verlag europäisches Buch, 1975); Engels' *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg* is also based on material contained in this book.

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signals the beginning of the bourgeois intelligentsia's miserable state in Germany.[4] Since that time, the word "revolution" has always smacked of fanaticism, personal whim and the morality of resistance—as in Luther's "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise!" it becomes the individual's verbal protest. Thus, "revolution" loses its dignity and is submerged in individual defensiveness and guilt as soon as protest broadens into organized resistance.

This collective trauma of the great peasants' revolution may have been what led the German literary intelligentsia to take up the repressed theme of the Peasants' War and reaffirm that all violent revolts are doomed. Thus, it is not surprising that Goethe did not write a play called "Franz von Sickingen" or "Ulrich von Hutten," whose personalities are much richer than "Götz von Berlichingen" (1772), a robber masked as a revolutionary. The revolutionary idea penetrates through the shroud of self-censorship only in the form of "a criminal by lost honor:" the social rebel who helps the poor and steals from the rich, thus binding the social imagination of the people. Since Götz lives at a time of general social unrest, he is caught in a dilemma in his struggle for recognition: his guiding interest is to serve the Emperor and to restore justice in his name, but he does not know how to realize his vision of order against superior enemies without the help of mass armies. But Götz shares the princes' contempt for the peasants. Like the Emperor's impending death, to him, their uprising is the sign of a natural catastrophe. Not a single friendly word on the peasants

4. Luther strikes a basic theme of German cultural history, which has undergone countless variations. How intertwined this frame of a revolution-counterrevolution is can be measured by Luther's changed political positions toward the peasants. The fear of chaos that seems to emanate from the people penetrates the structures of theory formation. Luther's famous interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (3, 28) illustrates this point as he notes: "So we hold that man is justified without the works of the law, but by faith alone." At stake is one single word in which the historical relations and contradictions crystallize: the word "alone." Aimed at his opponents who think in Latin, Luther adds it in the translation and underscores its meaning by adding in italics "*sola*." This word is not found in the Latin and Greek texts of the Bible. By this addition Luther seeks to clarify for the German mentality what he believes to be concealed in St. Paul's text. In fact, it expresses a specific ambivalence toward the people. First the translated content of the "*solum*" (only) is directed against the foreign Church and the language of the "Papist asses." Among other things, the national language is rebelling against the universal language of the Church. At the same time the colloquial idiom of the people is supposed to come to its rights against scholarly language. "...one must ask the mother in the house, the children in the street, the common man at the marketplace, and look them in the mouth to see how they talk, and translate accordingly: then they understand and notice that you are talking German with them" (*Circular Letter on Translation*, 1530). For centuries this Lutheran language is the only thing underwriting a certain identity of the German nation, though the courtly society speaks French until well into the 19th century. But a second contradiction expressed by the word "*solum*" deflects the revolutionary power of the first. Luther, here anticipating Kant and a basic conflict of the German bourgeoisie, digs a deep trench between faith and works, mental attitude and law, morals and politics. This meaning of the "*solum*" also is politically mediated by the radical critique of the indulgence trade and the power politics of institutionalized Christianity. According to Luther, the thesis of "justification by faith alone" is objectively required also by the "danger to people when they cling to works but miss faith and lose Christ." Yet, Luther knows that this critique of externalized Christianity is at the same time a political position against the revolutionary spirit of his time. "Let us do evil so that good may come, just as a mob-spirit has begun in our time" (*Circular Letter on Translation*). Of course, this is a jab at Münzer, but it applies basically to any revolutionary. For the weary and oppressed can never be freed by faith *alone*, but only by the works of the law, by external works. What for the property-owners and the mighty is a pleasant adjunct to their works, namely the feeling that faith alone brings eternal happiness, at the same time removes any legitimation for the oppressed to free themselves. Since Luther, only spiritual revolutions have been permitted.

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can be found in Goethe's text. In a conversation between Götz and his faithful subjects, Lerse and Georg, allusions to natural disasters, superstitions, and the fear of revolution are directly intermixed.[5]

Götz joins the peasants against his will. He marches in common cause with the rebellious peasants against the authorities, which gives Goethe no rest. This makes the conduct of the robber who waylays traveling merchants an honorable trade. Elizabeth, Götz's wife, grieves for the time when "he rode out to win laudable victory, then my heart did not ache. I looked forward to his return, while now I dread it... He has joined with rebels, criminals and murderers, and rides at their head." Even Lerse, the faithful servant, cannot calm her fears: "Would not princes and rulers owe him thanks if he had become the voluntary leader of an unruly mob to restrain their madness and so to spare many men and properties?" When Götz sees the coming defeat, he is tormented by the disgrace of having made common cause with the peasants. He would prefer to be lying a thousand miles away in the "deepest dungeon in Turkey": "To leave your life thusly, Götz, and so to end it! "Let it be so! Then my death is the surest sign that I had nothing in common with the dogs."

What marks the German bourgeois consciousness and its taboo-like aloofness from rebels, revolutionaries or any form of radical insubordination is not danger, but rather shame. A guilt by association is atonable only by self-punishment, which enables the rebel to return to a recognized place in society. Kleist expresses this most clearly in the fate of Michael Kohlhaas. When he receives no legal satisfaction for the injustice suffered from the ruin of his black horses, which had been left as security with the knights of Tronckenburg, he stages a revolt. It fails, and he is brought before the Prince-Elector who in a business-like manner states, as though nothing had happened: "Well, Kohlhaas, today is the day when you receive your justice! Look here, I am returning everything you lost by force at Tronckenburg, for which I, as your sovereign, was responsible: the black horses, the necklace, coins of the realm, clothing, even the hospital costs for your servant Herse who fell at the battle of Mühlenberg. Are you satisfied with me?" Kohlhaas is overcome and "joyously assured the arch-chancellor, standing with his hand on his chest, that his highest wish on earth was fulfilled." Thus, as Kohlhaas is dying under the executioner's axe, Kleist states tersely: "This is the story of Kohlhaas"; but, he adds, as if it no longer belonged to the story: "Amid the general mourning of the people, the corpse was laid in a coffin; and while the coffin-bearers buried him decently in the cemetery at the edge of town, the Prince-Elector summoned the deceased man's sons, explaining to the arch-chancellor that they were to be trained as knights in his school for pages." Consequently, amid the

5. Götz: "...we have fallen out of our circle."
Georg: "These are uncertain times. For eight days a terrible comet has been seen and all of Germany fears that it means the death of the Emperor, who is very ill."
Götz: "Very ill! Our course is coming to an end."
Lerse: "And here in the vicinity there are even more terrifying changes. The peasants have incited a terrible revolt."
Götz: "Where?"
Lerse: "In central Swabia. They are burning and murdering. I fear they will lay waste the entire country."
Georg: "There's a terrible war. Already about a hundred villages have revolted, and more are joining them every day. Recently a storm blew down entire forests, and shortly afterwards where the rebellion began, two fiery crossed swords were sighted in the air."
Götz: "Then some of my good lords and friends will surely also suffer innocently!"
Georg: "Too bad we cannot ride!"

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general mourning of the people, the revolutionary's death is sealed with social recognition and knighthood for his progeny.

To the bourgeois townsmen struggling for their own recognition, the people's collective initiatives always have seemed threatening and destructive. Even though these efforts express the interests of the bourgeois class, a final example of this contradiction is Schiller's *Song of the Bell,* which has supplied suitable proverbs to every German household, pupil and teacher. Schiller contrasts the conservative revision of organic forms that can only be undertaken by the master with a "wise hand, at the right time" (metaphorically understood as the competent statesman who, when he considers it necessary, initiates a "revolution from above") with the naked force and ensuing tumult of popular revolt—" 'Freedom and equality,' the cry was heard, the quiet citizen reaches for his arms, the streets fill up, the halls also, and bands of killers roam about."

The repression of the organizing force of the revolution, which seeks to eliminate the chaos of the *ancien régime,* has very deep effects. Even this contemporary of the French Revolution finds it hard to understand that the "quiet" citizen, secure in his work and property by his rights and freedoms and no longer having to fear the arbitrary actions of the "bands of killers" of feudal and absolutistic potentates, is the demand and result of national self-liberation or revolution.[6] This fetishization of peace and order is all the more striking since in "The Robbers" (which was derived from the republican-minded author Schubart, who was incarcerated at the Würtemberg state prison at Hohenasperg), Schiller knew precisely who the real enemies of law and order were, as the motto "In tyrannos" implies.

What causes the fear of revolution among bourgeois German intellectuals? Why have they divided the revolution into a *political* component, equated with conspiracy, insurrection and crime, and an *intellectual-cultural* element in which historical traditions are preserved and transmitted? The reduction of revolution into an essentially "spiritual revolution" also occurs in Kant and Hegel, who most decisively preserved the emancipatory dimensions of the French Revolution. To Hegel, external, political work leads to terror or the "fury of vanishing": "The only work and deed of general freedom, therefore, is death, namely a death which has no inner scope and fulfillment, for what is negated is the unfulfilled point of the absolutely free self; it is thus the coldest shallowest death without more significance than chopping a cabbage, or a sip of water."[7] Kant suggests that an epoch-making event like the French Revolution cannot be erased from mankind's memory. Yet, as a "sign of history," it characteristically indicates the moral propensity of the human race for improvement, not among those who risk their necks as revolutionary activists, but exclusively among

6. As Goethe wrote, this completely counterrevolutionary poem was especially dear to Schiller's heart. He formulated the first ideas on the *Bell* before the French Revolution, but the poem was finished only in 1799. Schiller's biographer, Emil Palleske says about the *Bell*: "No poetry can be compared with the *Bell*. Perhaps no poem has ever penetrated so deeply into our noble bourgeoisie and is so much a poetic glorification of our city life...the poet is therefore no longer himself, he is the bourgeoisie which through him sings the joy and sorrow of the working man to whom it has opened its heart. Everything that adorns this bourgeoisie, pity, discipline, industry, order, the protection of freedom, the honor of the house, is entoned more or less sonorously or softly, the coming and the passing generations, the danger of the elements, revolution; everything that falls naturally to the industrious quiet citizen's, or the master's range of vision is woven into it in both simple terse modalities and exalted descriptions." Cf. Emil Palleske, *Schillers Leben und Werke* (Stuttgart 1891), Vol. 2, p. 278 ff.

7. G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenologie des Geistes,* ed. Hoffmeister, p. 418.

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those who maintain a contemplative attitude toward the revolution, without directly committing their interests.

Norbert Elias has sought to base this precarious relation of the bourgeois intelligentsia to the people and the revolution, i.e., to anything that has to do with liberal-democratic freedoms and rights, on the uncertain middle position that it occupies between the undeveloped bourgeois class and the politically more important "courtly society." "Groups of a small, powerless, middle-class intelligentsia in Germany are assigned tasks which in France and England were taken over to a great extent by the court, by the aristocratic upper class. A variety of learned, middle-class 'princely servants' are primarily those who seek to create models for what is 'German' and, so at least in this intellectual sphere, produce a German unity which does not seem realizable in the political sphere. The concept of culture has the same function."[8] This is no accident. "Identity" is a central concept of German idealism, and by no means merely for intrinsically philosophical reasons.[9] Indeed, the identity problems revealed in the intelligentsia's mode of production and in their literary and philosophical works reflect the contradictory process of bourgeois class development in Germany.

The Bureaucracy as a Substitute for Identity

"The German question is the question of the obstacles to liberal democracy in Germany."[10] Dahrendorf formulates this question from the standpoint of the bourgeois conception of the state and pinpoints particular obstructions which could have been removed at any point of German history. These impediments have often been described: the dominance of the Prussian military organization, the Junker class in league with heavy industry, feudal superimpositions, and the blockage of national unity. Undoubtedly, these obstacles have had a share in preventing the development of liberal democracy in Germany. But these factors alone cannot explain the permanent misery of German democracy.

The question must be posed differently. The German question is the question of general social conditions that have prevented a bourgeois revolution as well as the formation of the bourgeoisie as an autonomous, self-conscious political class. All other things, even the typically statist orientation of the German working class and its forms of economic and political organization, are secondary phenomena by comparison. Clearly, the chapter on "original accumulation," in which Marx studies the initial conditions of the development of a bourgeois-capitalist society, has not yet been written for German society.[11] For example, what is the impact of large state-owned estates and of state factories for Prussian and later German development?

Compared with England and France, the German bourgeoisie failed to liberate itself from feudal coercive domination and the absolutistic state through self-

8. Norbert Elias, *Ueber den Prozess der Zivilisation* (Frankfurt am Main, 1976), Vol. I, p. 12.

9. Ralf Dahrendorf, *Gesellschaft und Demokratie in Deutschland* (München, 1975), p. 39.

10. Obviously, this sociological interpretation does not exhaust the truth-content of the aesthetic and philosophical structure; but it can not also be separated from it.

11. Moreover, Lenin and Mao Tse-tung knew what effects the process of "original accumulation" has in their respective countries for the concrete determination of the present. Both wrote basic analyses on this subject. But the German Marxists have clung literally to *Capital*, which however projects "original accumulation" in terms of English circumstances. Barrington Moore's *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* is one of the few leftist works which investigates the fate of bourgeois revolutions in terms of the roles played by the land-owning upper classes and the peasants.

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conscious revolutionary action and to assert itself as an autonomous political class. Yet, only in doing so could it have acquired the objective potential for regarding liberal freedoms as its own affair to be strongly defended. The German bourgeoisie's inability to solve the general problem of territorial unity and national identity by achieving its own economic and political class interests is one of the most crucial causes behind this lack of constitution.

The demand for a national "unity" was first advanced "from below" in the Peasants War and, as it turned out, its realization was a matter of the revolution's survival. The individual princes, however, stalled the peasants with empty promises until they had organized troops in neighboring lands, with whose help they ultimately defeated the peasant armies. Indeed, until the Munich workers' council republic, this German particularism has had a disastrous effect on all revolutionary and radical-democratic movements.

After the great period of the Hanseatic league, the German cities were impoverished and dependent on particular territorial powers; thus, bourgeois townsmen were unable to create a unity corresponding to popular national hopes. With many small city-states, there was no metropolitan center such as London or Paris that could have become the cultural center of the country. In France and England, the monarchy fitted and subordinated the cities into the emerging national state.[12] In Germany, however, the once flourishing cities were subjected to provincial territorial states. They lost not only their rich communications and trade relations, but also their political contacts with the outside world. This development also contributed to Germany "missing" the first phase of colonial imperialism.

"There then began those disastrous centuries in German history when the cities' mercantile bourgeois upper class that in the Middle Ages had been so brilliant, even in foreign policy, was systematically weaned from political activity and became politically malformed and ruined. The German city became small and dominated by parochial interests; along with its city, the bourgeoisie also became small and petty... The proud, upright stance of a bourgeois in control of his own history and territories was now replaced by the petty, narrow-minded, devout attitude of subordination in later centuries. Thus, one of the best sources of the nation's strength, perhaps the best, was lost for the time being."[13] Tariff-boundaries and political provincialism marked by the completely unsynchronized economic development of the various regions and lacking communications between the cities, the bourgeoisie soon developed and internalized a government-oriented mentality that made it impossible for it to organize egalitarian movements from below, such as Cromwell's "leveller army."

The inability to establish a national identity results from two further factors: The constitution of the *Reich*, "a monstrosity," caused an unstable balance, tottering between centralism and federalism, in which there were distracting "unredeemed" areas along the boundaries and which, down to the present day, have absorbed a great deal of political energy. Moreover, foreign troops have for centuries tumbled about on German soil. These factors also prevented the formation of a satisfactory, materially content national consciousness from below. The thesis of a "delayed nation" is only partly correct. Actually, there has never been *one* German nation.

Consequently, what the bourgeoisie as a national class could not accomplish became the mission of the Prussian state, which expanded into all of Germany. Although the Grand Prince-Elector and Friedrich II had still been "hard-line particularists," Prussia

12. Fritz Rörig, *Die europäische Stadt im Mittelalter*, (Göttingen, 1968), p. 121.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

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took the idea of national unity and incorporated it into an utterly particularistic state interest. As Engels observed, in the "Prussian style of capitalism" the feudal forces were not destroyed but were incorporated into the government structure. Following the catastrophic defeat at Jena and Auerstädt, Prussia initiated a "revolution from above" that turned out to be a subtle brand of counterrevolution. Subsequently, under the pressure of economic necessities, the government forged a unified national state with "blood and iron." Hardenberg clearly had recognized this when he said to his king: "We must do the same thing from above, Your Majesty, as the French have done from below." This "revolution from above" bound the bourgeois intelligentsia to the state in two ways. First, through practical reforms, it took the edge off any possible bourgeois revolution. And, second, through the rising of the literary and philosophical intelligentsia into courtly society, which in those days was almost their entire public. A very efficient bureaucracy, operated by such important minds as Stein, Hardenberg, Scharnhorst, Boyen and Humboldt was inserted between the bourgeoisie, striving for nobility status, and the absolutist state. This bureaucracy then became the most stable substitute for identity and has survived all catastrophes.

A remark of Admiral von Hintze demonstrates the degree to which the military and administrative bureaucracy guaranteed collective continuity, identity and stability against revolutionary initiatives. Standing in close contact with the top military leadership and in view of the Wilhelmine Reich's imminent collapse, he proposed a parliamentarization of the national government. "It was," he said, "the last revolution from above," the only means of "preventing the revolution from below."

Social Democracy and Liberalism

Even the German working class and its political organization, the Social Democratic Party were internally stamped by this "revolution from above," which continued through the Bismarckian social legislation into the present. Since the classes' political constitution depends on the structure of the whole society, the constituting process of the dominating class also decisively determines that of the dominated one. The effect of the bourgeoisie's failure to emancipate itself as an autonomous political entity within the absolutist state by the revolutionary power of equalization resulted in the Social Democratic Party and the unions carrying on their struggle in terms of the state—the party as the "people's government," "government of the future," and the unions as supporting the interests of the "present government." For both groups, a confrontation with the immediate class enemy was also always a direct confrontation with the state. Because of its power, the government necessarily appeared to be the stronger opponent, and so appeals were made to the state to provide the "vital necessities" that it had itself proclaimed as a legal right for the underprivileged.

Marx and Engels struggled in vain against the statism of German Social Democracy, which they falsely attributed to external influences, especially Lassalleanism. Max Weber, who was quite sensitive to social tendencies showing signs of counter-revolutionary stability, stated rightly in a 1907 speech before the General Assembly of the Association for Social Policy, that "in the long run, Social Democracy does not conquer the cities or the state, but vice versa, it is the state that conquers the party. And I do not see," Weber added to reassure his audience, "how bourgeois society as such, can perceive a danger in this." And Hermann Heller, an important contemporary theorist of the state, says, following the Second International: "Socialism is not abolition, but ennoblement, of the state. The worker comes closer to

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socialism, the closer he comes to the state."[14]

Where in this liberal spectrum is it possible to develop the citizens' self-conscious, state-critical stances? When the liberal bourgeoisie in 1848 tried to free itself politically, the working class, as in France, was already knocking at the door. As the bourgeois class gained economic strength, it lost interest in conquering political power. Two enemies, the working class and the absolutist-constitutional government, would have been too much for it. After the *Paulskirche*-movement failed, the state-oriented reconciliation of the *citoyen* and the bourgeois had taken place once and for all. The result was a citizenry totally loyal to the state, the *Staats-Bürger*. The strong state, which promised to stabilize their deflected self-consciousness, then, lost all its horrors for the liberals.

Counterrevolution as Overcompensation for Insubordination

In political terms, lack of identity and a deflected self-consciousness led to a terroristic inclination to coerce identity, projecting one's own violent tendencies onto the enemy. These totalitarian projections fail to make any fine distinction between revolutionaries and radical democrats. So it is not surprising that the German bourgeoisie's ideas of revolution, which under normal conditions penetrate deeply into the working class, are associated far more with conspiracies, with individual banditry, and with mob-leaders than with the objective processes of all historically known revolutions.[15] Against such objective historical forces, a well equipped police force, secret service and repressive laws can accomplish practically nothing. In short, these forces produce a situation which Lenin defines as a general national crisis, the "lower strata" no longer want the old order and the "upper strata" no longer can live and rule in the old manner. Thus, according to all historical experiences, nothing is more dangerous than to allow a German minister of police to define the features of either a pre-revolutionary or revolutionary situation. Plainly, a general strike would be counted as one of the marks of a pre-revolutionary situation.[16]

In Germany it is thought that a revolution is "made." It is seen primarily as a technical process—like building a bridge, establishing a club or organizing a counter-revolutionary *putsch*. But since revolutions can succeed only if the interests of popular majorities are at stake, they follow entirely different laws than those that apply in opposing or crushing a revolution.

Because of these distortions and projections, the power of the restoration in Germany always contains an element of overcompensation—literally of retaliation for insubordinate behavior. No proper proportion exists between the means applied and the real threat to class domination. This bloody line extends throughout German

14. Hermann Heller, *Sozialismus und Nation*, 2nd ed., p. 55.

15. Cf. Karl Griewank, *Der neutzeitliche Revolutionsbegriff* (Vienna, 1972).

16. In *Spiegel,* Aug. 2, 1976, the minister of internal affairs of Rheinland-Pfalz, Heinz Schwarz, discussed a draft for a new police-law. Besides the fact that he is a strong advocate of the well-aimed fatal shot, he is certainly one of those who feels threatened by a pre-revolutionary situation during violent demonstrations.

> Schwarz: "I can, after all, throw the grenade far enough to one side. Anyway, the use of hand-grenades and machine guns is supposed to be possible only in a certain situation and only after a warning -- i.e., when the participant could leave. But there are cases when they should and must be used, e.g., in a pre-revolutionary situation. The chance must exist to suppress a violent revolution."
>
> Spiegel: "We're still quite a way from that."
>
> Schwarz: "There's no sense in passing laws when a certain situation has already arrived. I personally hope this paragraph will never have to be applied."

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history: the vengeful slaughter of the already defeated peasant armies; the persecution and hunting down of German Jacobins who sympathized with the French Revolution; the Carlsbad decrees that began the so-called demagogue prosecutions[17] and led to police terrorism against university teachers and students;[18] the anti-socialist laws; and fascism. What connects all these examples is the fact that counterrevolutionary violence in Germany is applied preventively, and the present phase of repression in the Federal Republic bears the unmistakable features of counterrevolutionary prevention. The laws directed against the Left serve to forestall the socialist and Communist social changes foreshadowed by Italy and France. These changes rest on the hopes that genuine majority rule could one day spread also to West Germany. Marx had precisely this haunting quality of German restoration in mind when he said: "Yes, German history boasts of a movement such as no nation under the historical heaven has ever had before or will ever imitate. For we have shared the restorations of the modern nations without having shared their revolutions. We were restored, first because other nations dared a revolution, and second because other nations suffered a counterrevolution—the first time because our masters were afraid, and the second time because they were not."

The Thrust of German History

West Germany does not understand itself just as the legal successor of the German *Reich*. It has also in many respects accepted the heritage of German history, slightly processed and frequently repressed and distorted. It is not accidental, then, that a Frenchman, Alfred Grosser, had to underscore certain historical facts. On Oct. 12, 1975, in the Paulskirche, the building where the first German parliament met, he pointed out two dangerous tendencies in the Federal Republic: the glorification of a statist order, and the self-delusion that fascism and the undermining of basic democratic rights are a product of extremists. "Perhaps I am too much a Frenchman or I am thinking too vividly of 1933, but it seems to me that there is in the Federal Republic more and more talk of defending the basic order of the state, and less and less of defending the basic freedoms against the state." Six months later Grosser sharpened his criticism even more by suggesting that the greatest danger to democracy comes from the center of society, not from radical fringe groups.

Unless one wants to ignore all historical experience, in Germany it is necessary to speak primarily of state encroachment as a threat to democracy. Two justice ministers of state governments, Ulrich Klug, a liberal, and Dieter Posser, a Social Democrat and well-known defender in the KPD trials, were alarmed at the form, content and results of recent investigations of 500,000 persons. According to the criteria applied and

17. Brückner's book on the murder of the Chancellor von Kotzebue by the student Sand is one of the few works that consciously establishes the link with the present. It is also the most successful attempt to capture, through documentation and analysis, the daily atmosphere of the fears leading to restoration: CF. Peter Brückner, *...bewahre uns Gott in Deutschland vor irgendeiner Revolution!* (Wagenbach-Verlag, 1975).

18. The parallels with the current situation of anti-sedition controls and job restrictions are striking. Hegel, the "philosopher of the state," was always under surveillance. His wish to hire his Heidelberg pupil Corové as an assistant failed because the Student-Associationist Corové had written about the Sand case. The police investigated Hegel's assistant and arrested him. By their constant surveillance and bans against his university employment, they literally ruined Corové's career, though Hegel considered him especially suited as an interpreter of his way of thinking. Corové finally worked in the tax administration of the city of Cologne. The second assistant seemed beyond suspicion. But finally he too was arrested under suspicion of demagogic activity. CF. Jacques D'Honde, *Hegel in seiner Zeit (Berlin 1818-1831)* (Berlin, 1973), p. 50ff.

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based on the questioning of neighbors and co-workers, it came out that *only* about 300 would not be acceptable for public service. "That was not our objective!" the two declared, thus introducing a series of confessions of guilt by leading liberal and Social Democratic politicians who had helped to initiate and implement the anti-radical decrees. Are not those who approved their resolutions and who now have corrected and "defused" them the masters of the effects and intentions of their actions? I suspect not.

It is the missing, repressed consciousness of one's national history that keeps many from recognizing the fear of revolution binding the self-conception of the German bourgeoisie and which even today determines the behavior of the political parties and the government machinery. There is no such thing as an anthropologically grounded national character. Still, when a country has not opened new dimensions of its human and social wealth through radical upheavals, there is an astonishing historical constancy.

An enlightened Frenchman or Italian must find it hard to understand that a locomotive engineer who belongs to the German Communist Party is a threat to the government of the Federal Republic, whereas in Italy and France entire cities and regions are under the administration of Communist and Socialist parties. In Germany, comparable developments long ago conjured up the danger of a *coup d'état*.

But because of the present phase of repression, it would be a mistake to forget a period that was far more dangerous for the Left. The violence exerted after the 1956 prohibition of the Communist Party against hundreds of Communists and functionaries of the Free German Youth who were jailed on charges of treasonously endangering the government, was far more serious for those affected than is the current job restriction. Juridically questionable formulations, such as "guilt by association," were used as guidelines. People were sentenced retroactively for offenses committed prior to the prohibitory legislation, and there was surveillance of "suspicious" individuals and organizations for having collaborated with or even associated with Communists. All these factors are quite comparable to the McCarthy era in the United States. The passages on violence in the criminal code were being discussed so that agitation for strikes, or even a strike itself, could be subsumed under the factual earmarks of violence in the sense of paragraph 80 of the criminal code.[19] This was done, then as well as now, without violating the regulations of constitutional government. And has it been forgotten what role protecting the constitution played in all the campaigns against remilitarization, against arming the *Bundeswehr* with atomic weapons, or against the emergency laws? Adolf Arndt, the important Social Democratic jurist, at the time of the verdict outlawing the German Communist Party, pointed to these subtle methods of undermining democracy: "No undermining of law is as treacherous and dangerous as that which wears the stolen mantle of law and uses legalistic means."

If the history of a country has a counterrevolutionary bias, then no far-fetched occasions are necessary to set in motion the entire machinery of governmental and legal safeguards. Countries with strong traditions of counterrevolution have a very sensitive early-warning system. The protest-movement of students and youths who consciously went against the current of German history aimed more at protecting civil and political rights than at revolution. But in the process of "normalizing" the present

19. The most precise analyses of these contexts are found in Wolfgang Abendroth, *Arbeiterklasse, Staat und Verfassung* (Frankfurt am Main and Cologne, 1975).

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situation in reference to German history, the remnants of this movement and the actions of its individual groups have provided a pretext for the start of a new counter-revolution in Germany. This does not always happen spectacularly. At one time, for example, the protectors of the constitution as a rule tried to prove that the actions of the accused violated the Constitution. Now, however, the person who has fallen under suspicion must give proof of his complete loyalty to the Constitution. He can do this only by a "general confession." In principle, there is a deep universal distrust of the entire nation's loyalty to the Constitution.

With its institutions of representation and its mediation of popular sovereignty through political parties, the Constitution leaves practically no room for popular plebiscites. Yet, by seeking to set this institutional rampart against fascistic-authoritarian developments, the federal constitution finds itself continuing the Prussian authoritarian tradition of constitutional government, which was one of the causes of fascism as it tended to restrict the democratic claims of the "mob."

This basic distrust can be shown clearly in the problem of the political strike and referenda. Although it is becoming more and more difficult to separate the political and the economic elements of a mass strike (every strike which releases mass activity that is not controlled at every step by the union organization is regarded as a political threat to the present ruling system), the Federal Republic holds firmly to this traditional division of economics and politics.[20] Yet, there is no example of a politically conceived strike ever having led to the decline of the democratic Constitution.

This basic distrust is even more evident in doubts over the "reliability" of the people (though today dangers are seen as coming almost exclusively from the Left) as in connection with discussions on the implementation of the Hamburg law of May 9, 1958, calling for a referendum on atomic weapons. Although it was immediately obvious that the referendum only was intended to provide the Hamburg senate with a survey of public opinion, the federal administration obtained a temporary injunction from the supreme court against the referendum. "The supreme court did not—as the federal administration originally requested—condemn as unconstitutional once and for all every type of plebiscitory participation of the people on positions about basic political questions. But it prohibited the States (Hamburg, Bremen and Hessen) from carrying out referenda on such political questions—i.e., all important ones—that fall under the competency of the federal government. It also extended this prohibition to municipalities by the verdict against Hessen."[21] So by fetishizing the procedures of representative democracy, a legally unassailable means of combating all extra-parliamentary activities of the people was created. Consequently, the realization of democratic rights was reserved exclusively for the government and its constitutional institutions. But with such restrictions, the *political* articulation of mass needs becomes impossible in the long run.

Under such conditions, it is quite logical to reduce the concept of unconstitutional actions to an anti-constitutional mentality, which neither the Constitution nor the decisions of the supreme court intended. West Germany lives on the myth of the "center" but the *real* danger to democracy arises from that very "center."

20. Cf. Wolfgang Abendroth, "Der politische Streik," *op.cit.*
21. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

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The Internationalization of Internal Ostracism

The forces of the Left are not weaker today than ten years ago. On the contrary, they have grown considerably, though in the Federal Republic they are fragmented and caught in unproductive competition with one another. In 1968, the state, in full possession of its integrating power, was still able to invite the extra-parliamentary opposition to return to the institutions. Today, however, this strategy is at an end. Once again, the state sees itself compelled to expel one by one those who it had received into its institutions and official organizations, to ostracize them socially in order to be rid of the political challenge. This ostracism practiced with some success in the administrative "treatment of enemies" apparently fascinates leading German politicians to the extent that they would like to export it all over Europe as a key component of a "healthy" model of government. Not only individuals or small groups, but entire political organizations and parties are to be banned from society as soon as they prove capable of interesting the majority in a socialist alternative to capitalism.

Portugal opened the door through which the spirit of the Third World Liberation penetrated to the center of Europe and expanded before our eyes as if no power could stop it. Unfortunately, it is the historical tragedy of Portugal to be unable to withstand the united defenders of European order and to be steered back into those channels which, here, too, safeguard capitalism. Still, it must be remembered that Salazar and Franco also had believed that their order against Socialism and Communism was built to stand forever.

As in 1848, a spectre is again haunting Europe: the spectre of Communism and Socialism. All the old European powers have formed an alliance against this spectre—the Pope, the Second International awakened from its apparent death, the Christian parties, European liberals, and the protectors of the German Constitution. And as if they felt especially competent for guiding restoration, German politicians push into the foreground in the attempt to bind together the parties of the old order. A polarization of European political forces is currently taking place, comparable to nothing since the twenties and thirties except the struggle of social revolutions leading to Third World liberation. West Germany occupies a special position in this process of suppressing socialist alternatives to capitalism; as always, it is the most economically stable and politically quiescent country. Therefore, foreign reactionary forces are basing their hopes for order on West Germany. In the struggle against repression and for a socialist social transformation, the West German Left does not stand alone, but it would be mistaken to rely on international crises and to adopt forms of struggle and organization that have proven effective in other countries but which do not express the German experience. It is a matter of determining the concrete forms of struggle and organization appropriate to the specific conditions of West German society.

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FROM *BERUFSVERBOT* TO TERRORISM

by Jack Zipes

Since early 1972, nearly one million West Germans have been investigated and placed under surveillance by the state in accordance with a "Decree Against Radicals" (*Radikalenerlass*). Labelled more correctly by its opponents as *Berufsverbot* (professional proscription), this decree was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1975 even though it undermines the Constitution's guarantees of civil rights. In essence this decree places the state above the Constitution and empowers the state to rationalize the Constitution for its own ends. Thus, civil servants are obliged to suspend critical judgment and dutifully serve the state which may arbitrarily use the Constitution to secure its own control and vouchsafe the interests of its major constituency and supporters. *Berufsverbot* makes it practically impossible for anyone who has an independent, critical mind to be employed by the civil service: "Appointment to the public service takes for granted that the applicant guarantees that he will actively defend the Constitution at all times. A reasonable doubt of this, as a rule, justifies rejection."[1] Both the Constitution and reasonable doubt are determined by the state.

The proclamation against radicals by the Federal Chancellor and the respective state ministers was made in 1972 without popular consultation. Such a peremptory act by these administrative leaders signified that the real issue behind the "Decree Against Radicals" concerned the coercion of civil servants: they must comply with and implement governmental policies which minimize the possibilities for democratic self-determination. To enforce the decree, there has been an enormous build-up of federal and state police agencies both in manpower and technology. "Internal security" is the slogan used to justify the pervasive police regulation of daily life, and police enforcement has led to a general mood of fear and suspicion. "Enemies of the basic democratic order" are allegedly lurking everywhere. Yet, when one searches behind desks, in closets, under beds, and in dark corners, one finds either government bugs or secret state agents.

At first glance the situation seems absurd. After all West Germany is the most stable of all the advanced capitalist countries. The unemployment figure of approximately one million is relatively small and minimized by effective insurance and welfare policies. Inflation is the lowest in the world, and unions cooperate as partners with management to keep wage increases moderate and to prevent unruly strikes. Industry has even managed to retain two million foreign workers despite unemployment and inflation. Radical parties on both the Left and the Right have little support for their activities, and, as the 1975 elections showed, they are virtually powerless in the society as a whole. The student movement, though not dead, is crippled by sectarianism and can form only fragile coalitions to protest against *Berufsverbot* and new conservative university policies. Heavy restrictions have been placed on admissions to universities, barring one third of "gymnasium" graduates from higher education, and the overcrowding of the universities has led to entrance restrictions and to an economistic

1. Institut für marxistische Studien und Forschung (ISMF), *Berufsverbote in der BRD*, Informationsbericht 22 (Frankfurt am Main, 1975), p. 13.

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reorientation of education to fill industry's needs. Students are scared, and, instead of joining radical political organizations, they are more concerned about future job possibilities at a time when new positions are scarce. Thus, support for radical, not to mention terrorist, activity is weakened. The leadership of the RAF (Red Army Faction) or the Baader-Meinhof Group is either in prison or has supposedly committed suicide. According to most estimates, there are no more than 200 terrorists still active in West Germany. All things considered, West Germany is indeed a "model state" of law and order.

Why then has the government been taking such exhaustive measures against radicals, dissidents, and progressives in the civil service? Why has it used its own institutions and the mass media to make it appear that a communist or radical overthrow is imminent? The security control, the atmosphere of fear and intimidation, and the apathy of the populace make it clear that a "communist overthrow" is many light years away from this country which has never been famous for its revolutions. The Kafkaesque atmosphere of seemingly inexplicable political persecution is such that one is tempted to dismiss it with a shrug of the shoulders and an ironic paraphrase from Marx, who once pointed out that the Germans have always been backwards; they've never shared in the revolutions of other countries, only in their restorations.

Yet, this peculiar German fetish for restoring law and order cannot be dismissed with irony, for the state's seemingly irrational violation of democratic rights has a historical tradition and calculated logic which demands public exposure, critical analysis, and active resistance. Moreover, *Berufsverbot* not only insidiously affects the daily lives of West Germans, but it is also linked to repressive measures currently used by other advanced capitalist states to prevent the emergence of emancipatory forms of civil cooperation and democratic self-determination. Throughout the world the need to establish a counter public sphere as an alternative to the depoliticized bourgeois public sphere is becoming increasingly clear. It is only in this context that the meaning of the West German state's violations of democratic rights through *Berufsverbot* and other criminal measures of legalized repression can be grasped. As Jürgen Habermas has noted: "The arrangement of formal democratic institutions and procedures permits administrative decisions to be made largely independently of specific motives of the citizens. This takes place through a legitimation process that elicits generalized motives—that is, diffuse mass loyalty—but avoids participation. This structural alteration of the bourgeois public sphere provides for application of institutions and procedures that are democratic in form, while the citizenry, in the midst of an objectively political society, enjoy the status of passive citizens with only the right to withhold acclamation. Private autonomous investment decisions thus have their necessary complement in the civic privatism of the civil public."[2]

In other words, *Berufsverbot* does not contradict the formal democratic functioning of the state, but must be seen as part of a long-term preventive strategy developed by the state to use democratic *forms* to conceal the arbitrary character of its operations. Ever since its foundation in 1949, the Federal Republic has enacted formal democratic legislation to safeguard capital.[3] Empowered to protect citizens from arbitrary

2. *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston, 1973), pp. 36-37.

3. Sebastian Cobler, *Die Gefahr geht von Menschen aus. Der vorverlegte Staatschutz* (Berlin, 1976), pp. 59-60. "In order to guarantee a restoration of capitalist conditions of domination in the Federal Republic without friction, all effective socialist opposition was knocked out of commission in rapid succession from the very beginning: the new 1951 law for the protection of the state had only been in regulation for three months when the federal government requested

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encroachment of their constitutional rights, the state actively sought to return to power interest groups which had been largely responsible for the rise of fascism and World War II.[4] To prevent the exposure of such state manipulation, enemies had to be found outside the system. Given the traditional fear of communists and of the GDR, it was easy to paint a red threat as the new totalitarian menace. With American aid, the security of an insecure, fearful citizenry could be identified with the restoration and security of the capitalism and *formal* parliamentary rule. It became "natural" for West Germans to conclude that any threat to the state and the "German "German economic miracle" could be likened to a threat to their personal identity.

Though obviously different from the Nazi system, the Federal Republic continued to emphasize state security rather than democratic process. As Wolf-Dieter Narr has pointed out: "a constitutional state (*Rechtsstaat*) and a democracy cannot be equated. No democracy can exist without the unconditional recognition of the basic laws because this is the only way the freedom of the individual remains remains central. However, the reverse conclusion is not valid. A formal constitutional state is easily imaginable as a non-democratic, even as an authoritarian-hierarchical constitutional system."[5] Narr shows that the development of the constitutional state in modern Germany reached its high point in the second empire after 1871, but that democracy could not unfold because of state regulations and regimentations. Thus, to gain civil rights, citizens must become clients of the bureaucracy, and the "achievement" of the German bureaucratic machine consists in its hindering the formation of substantial democracy while guaranteeing social peace.[6] In doing so, the bureaucracy has made certain goals seem plausible to the citizenry: the protection of property, the build-up of the police, the construction of improved correctional facilities, more punishment—all at the costs of civil rights. In this context, it becomes clear why *Berufsverbot* is not as absurd and Kafkaesque as it may seem. Its stern contours have been constructed to anticipate problems which will intensify due to the crisis of the bourgeois public sphere. Moreover, these mechanisms have begun to close like a vise clamping down on the opposition so that it cannot express and act upon its needs. *Berufsverbot*, then, plays a very significant role in the network of West German

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the prohibition of the Communist Party (KPD) which was eventually granted by the Constitutional Supreme Court in 1956. In the meantime the Federal Supreme Court developed an administration of justice in conjunction with the prohibition which was to provide measures for taking care of internal security. These measures which often overruled the decisions of the lower courts have become the guidelines for political criminal justice today."

4. See Ute Schmidt and Tilman Fichter, *Der erzwungene Kapitalismus* (Berlin, 1973) and Bernhard Blanke *et al.*, *Die Linke im Rechsstaat. Bedingungen sozialistischen Politik 1945-1965*, Vol. 1 (Berlin, 1976.

5. *Wir Bürger als Sicherheitsrisiko* (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1977), p. 36.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 38. "The constitutional state and the bureaucratic administrative state have become today twin phenomena (they were at one with another from the beginning). This means then that the citizens first receive their legal rights (*Rechte*) and the security which is based on these rights always through the mediation of the bureaucracy. If impotence (*Ohmnacht*) and inequality of rights are produced through the sheer mass of laws, then the realization of the rights through the bureaucracy—or to be more correct—the creation of the rights as procedural form of the bureaucracy makes sure that the rights remain abstract *vis-à-vis* the person concerned and reinforce the importance of the person concerned. The success of a law is not determined by the fact that the problems of the people concerned are actually solved, but that calm is restored in a certain social sphere—recognizable for legislative and bureaucratic courts. The logic of the legal regimentation alone shows that it does not pertain to the concrete resolution of the problem but pertains to the appropriate treatment determined by the bureaucracy's definitions of the problem."

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political repression, and its ramifications can be traced in the areas of authority and bureaucracy, the economy, the police, international politics, and daily life.

Since the present policy of *Berufsverbot* directly touches large sections of middle-class intellectuals, it has played a major role in influencing *the majority of intellectuals* to place their skills unconditionally at the service of the state.[7] In this regard, one can talk about a split among intellectuals which has its roots in the 18th century and in the formation of the modern state: there are the conservatives who in their unwavering dedication have allowed themselves to become instrumentalized as the legislative arms of the state, and the progressives, who have resisted identification with the state and serve as the critical conscience of the German people. Since the end of the 18th century the conservative civil servants have undergone continual bureaucratization and identification with the state, and this bureaucratization has become widespread in the whole society. In other words, the same socio-political conditioning that fosters servility, conformism, and alienation has been traditionally operative at all social levels.

With the rise of the nation-state in the 18th century,[8] it became necessary to rationalize policies in the transition from an agrarian economy to an industrial one. Continuing the practice of late feudalism, civil servants were trained and obliged to act in behalf of autocrats. Influenced by Prussian models, the new bureaucrats, drawn mainly from the aristocracy and the upper bourgeoisie, were trained to sacrifice themselves for the state and to identify objectivity, impartiality and justice with that state.[9] As a reward for their service, they were given tenure, pensions, and other privileges. As they became indispensable for preserving state rule, these intellectuals acted largely as bastions of authoritarianism in Germany. Throughout history they have had their progressive counterparts who were constantly censored, harassed, and imprisoned for attempting to bring about greater democracy and popular sovereignty. Thus, historically, the concept of popular sovereignty never became popular in Germany, and it has been successfully checkmated by the concept of enlightened rule from above. In the 18th century, when England and France were fighting popular sovereignty, the German states were still developing notions of enlightened monarchy based on a patronizing aristocracy. What seemed to be a democratizing restructuring of the 280 odd German principalities by the French during the Napoleonic Wars led only to a tightening of control by fewer monarchs during the Metternich Period (1816-1848). During this time the growing civil service bureaucracy collaborated with the restoration in carrying out repressive legislation aimed at excluding popular majorities from the public sphere. Hence, as Habermas has shown, strict limitations were placed on rational discourse.[10] The administrative controls of the various German states which perverted and depoliticized the public sphere after 1848 were reinforced in 1871 when Prussia unified them.

World War I and its exposure of the state's corrupt practices jeopardized the principle of rule from above. But, in 1918-19 the impending revolution was forestalled by the Social Democratic Party leadership under Friedrich Ebert. By relying on the civil service, the administration kept enacting laws and decrees dictated by industry and the state. Such conservative practices preyed upon the widespread

7. Though other groups and classes have been greatly affected by *Berufsverbot*, my focus will largely be on intellectuals since they play a key role in the socialization process.

8. See Hans Kohn, *Prelude to Nation-States* (Princeton, 1967).

9. See Armanski, Bruns and Penth, *Deutschland deine Beamten* (Berlin, 1976).

10. *Strukturwandel der Oeffentlichkeit* (Berlin, 1962).

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fears and insecurity of the populace. In 1933, the German civil service characteristically remained the bulwark of the state under the fascist regime, and it did not change fundamentally under the postwar leadership of Adenauer, Erhard, Kiesinger, Brandt, and Schmidt, who have depended on the authoritarian nature of this group to avoid all kinds of legitimation crises.[11]

This development of an authoritarian bureaucracy of dutiful civil servants who blindly serve the state's abstract laws has its historical parallel in the exclusion, imprisonment, and censorship of progressive intellectuals. During the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars there were numerous arrests and incarcerations of German intellectuals who supported the Jacobins. Political repression became particularly heavy in the period following the Holy Alliance and the murder of Kotzebue in 1819.[12] The universities and public service institutions were systematically cleansed of radicals up through 1848. Börne, Heine, Büchner, and Marx, to name but a few outstanding examples, were forced into exile, not to mention the thousands who were imprisoned, tortured, and killed, fighting for basic liberties of the people. This occurred again after the collapse of the 1848 Revolution, and later, after the Social Democratic Party was formed, laws were promulgated from 1878 to 1890 against the "dangerous" activities of socialists. Yet, once the Social Democratic Party managed to legitimate itself at the beginning of the 20th century and pursued compromise programs to attain state power, new dissident groups formed and grew, especially after the Social Democrats supported the participation of Germany in World War I. Persecution of leftist intellectuals followed the failures of 1918-19 to create a revolution, and this persecution was continued in different ways in 1933 by the takeover of the fascists and in 1947 at the onset of the Cold War up through the interdiction of the Communist Party in 1956. Despite resistance of intellectuals and oppositional movements to state political repression,[13] the essential structure of the West German civil service was not changed following World War II. Most of the functionaries employed by the Nazi state were able to maintain their positions, unless they had to serve sentences as criminals. Public statements of repentence and special denazification programs reintegrated old-school civil servants whose work facilitated the restoration of capitalism in the Federal Republic.[14] The 1950s spawned an economic miracle without dealing adequately with authoritarianism and the fascist past. Hence, it was not surprising when a crack began to develop in state power from above.

The 1960s saw the emergence of a younger generation of intellectuals who resented the authoritarianism of the conservative civil service apparatus which could not conceal the exploitative tendencies of advanced capitalism while ostensibly promulgating democratization of the socio-economic system. Sensitive to the fascist

11. Cf. Armanski, Bruns and Penth, *Deutschland deine Beamten* and Bernd Wunder, "Die Entstehung des modernen Staates und des Berufsbeamtentums in Deutschland im frühen 19. Jahrhundert," *Leviathan*, 4 (1974), pp. 459-478.

12. Cf. Peter Brückner, *...Bewahre uns Gott in Deutschland vor irgendeiner Revolution!* (Berlin, 1975).

13. Obviously the resistance of intellectuals must be historically tied to larger political organizations and class struggles.

14. Cf. Ute Schmidt and Tilman Fichter, *Der erzwungene Kapitalismus;* Eberhardt Schmidt, *Die verhinderte Neuordnung 1945-1952* (Frankfurt am Main, 1970); Günter Plum, "Versuche gesellschaftspolitischer Neuordnung," *Westdeutschlands Weg zur Bundesrepublik 1945-1949*, Beiträge von Mitarbeitern des Instituts für Zeitgeschichte (Munich, 1976), pp. 94-165.

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past, the younger members of the intelligentsia led the protest against former Nazis, rearmament, the creation of emergency martial laws, and political and economic scandals like the Spiegel affair of 1961 which exposed the devious practices of the then Minister of Defense, Franz Josef Strauss.

As dissident intellectuals began to develop a counter public sphere they formed a more concrete socialist position which led to anti-authoritarian projects, democratic initiatives by community action groups, and workplace organizing for co-determination at factories and large business firms. Such experiments initially received the support of the SPD as it opportunistically rode the wave of reform to political power in the mid-1960s. Thus, the brief liberal interlude in the state from 1967 to 1971 allowed numerous pro-socialist intellectuals to become civil servants, and they earnestly sought to take "the long march" through the state's institutions in order to democratize them. The rift within the ruling class and the threat to formal democracy by activists in the depoliticized public sphere challenged traditional authoritarian rule. This rift either had to be mended or the opponents had to be eliminated.

There are obvious reasons why progressive civil servants had to be purged and why radical candidates for the civil service had to be prevented from obtaining positions. Placed in key positions of administering state policies, they opposed the achievement principle while revitalizing education and fostering democratization. Since conditions in the public sphere of socialization had been dominated by authoritarian traditions in the post-war era, the breakthrough made by progressive educators in the late 1960s had the potential to bring about a genuine cultural revolution. For the first time in the history of the Bundesrepublik actual socialist programs were proposed and enacted in schools and universities while the mass media also became more receptive to social-democratic change through the efforts of young people who began studying and experimenting with radical and critical theory. From 1967 to 1971 there was a *real* movement afoot to reverse the authoritarian tendency in institutions of socialization and the civil service, and, if this movement had been allowed to continue unchecked, the consequences for capitalist hegemony would have been grave. It should be kept in mind that the West German civil service makes up 15% of the employed labor force, and that it not only includes governmental administrators, assistants, and office workers, but also social workers, teachers, judges, and post office and railroad employees. In other words, there are over three and a half million people employed by the state as *Arbeiter* (workers), *Angestellte* (employees) and *Beamte* (civil servants) with a degree of job security. Among all of these groups, the state has chosen to exercise the most extreme and rigid control over the teaching sector: educators are crucial for inculcating the types of values, ideals, and norms in the young who are supposed to reproduce the efficiency and productivity of the socio-economic system *as it is*. If teachers at all levels insist on democratic reforms, they pose an internal threat to state security. Hence, they must be made *to appear* as enemies of the Constitution and as trouble makers, radicals, terrorists, or Bohemians. They must be stereotyped into "scum" so that they can be liquidated.

To confuse the issue, the state had to shift gears from the era of reform to show how the reformers had "gotten out of hand" and had become "terrorists" or, at least, sympathizers. All earlier accomplishments of the state, i.e., the restoration of capitalism during the economic miracle of the 1950s, were presented as threatened by radicals. Thus the 1972 "Decree Against Radicals" was the result of a preventive strategy embedded in the political system since 1950. Supposedly, the decree was designed to eliminate both right and left extremists from the civil service, but the

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Right has barely been touched. The general vague nature of the decree makes it a blanket for state purges of anyone suspected of dissident activity. Its total license reveals its totalitarian nature. Consequently, civil servants can be dismissed and candidates for the civil service have been denied employment for the following reasons: 1) membership in radical organizations; 2) sympathizing with radical organizations; 3) serving as a leftist candidate in a student council organization; 4) demonstrating solidarity with students protesting school policies; 5) giving a course with anti-capitalist content; 6) openly criticizing school administrations; 7) signing leaflets against war, political injustices, and inhumane treatment of prisoners; 8) writing articles for allegedly subversive magazines; 9) being married to or living with persons considered to be dissidents or members of subversive groups; 10) participating in political demonstrations.[15]

Since state records are not public, it is difficult to estimate how many people have actually been affected by *Berufsverbot*. As of July 1975, there were only 553 known cases of actual proscription, but nearly a million people have been investigated, and their records are on a computerized system available to both public and private employers wishing to screen out security risks. In addition to the investigations, the three and a half million civil servants are under constant surveillance and live in constant fear of being thoroughly investigated and losing their jobs because of "anti-constitutional" dispositions.

By making alleged subversive and radical civil servants responsible for disorder and social upheavals, the state has been able to shift the blame for the economic failures and the inequities of daily life to "mysterious enemies" falsely designated as terrorists and provocateurs. Since the mysterious enemy is not defined except in rare instances, anyone can become an enemy. Thus, psychological fear, distrust, and suspicion haunt the German public and private spheres.

The political repression against alleged enemies of the Constitution in the civil service did not commence in full force until 1971 with the emergence of the first signs of a major international economic crisis. Repression increased with the intensification of the economic crisis and the rise of Eurocommunism in France, Italy and Spain. In 1976, there were over one million unemployed workers in West Germany, and, although the economy is still the strongest in Europe, it is faced with many problems: rising prices, demands for higher wages, meager social welfare programs, decreasing standards of living, tax reforms, discontentment of foreign workers and their families, increased crime, workers' demands for co-management. Recent studies of workers' attitudes have shown that concepts such as loyalty to the firm have lost their meaning.[16] Instead, there has been an increase of boycotts, industrial sabotage, and demands for better working conditions. One study about the values of workers concluded that traditional beliefs in thrift, order, modesty, politeness and respect of someone else's property have drastically declined.[17] By 1971, one survey showed that only 30% of the workers were happy with their work, and only 30% believed that there was equitable distribution of the national wealth.[18]

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15. There have been a number of publications which have listed and described the different cases of *Berufsverbot*. One of the best sources is the magazine *Päd.extra*, 15-16 (August 15, 1976), p. 35. See also Martin Oppenheimer, "Academic Freedom in the Federal Republic of Germany," *AAUP Bulletin* (April 1977), pp. 45-49.
16. Cobler, *Die Gefahr geht von den Menschen aus*, p. 22.
17. J. Jeske, ed., *Wie schütze ich meinen Betrieb?* (Düsseldorf, 1973), p. 11.
18. Cobler, *Die Gefahr geht von den Menschen aus*, p. 22.

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The SPD inability to effectively manage crises is becoming increasingly clear and accounts for the recent dismal electoral showing of the ruling party. The state is faced with the choice of finding new ways to maintain advanced capitalism or turning the economy over to public ownership and social-democratic forms of organization. To prevent the latter alternative, it is necessary to invent scapegoats who allegedly threaten the economy and the free democratic order. At the same time the citizenry must be made to fear for their jobs. So, unemployment is regulated to increase job competition and make workers more dependent on the state while increasing anxiety over losing one's livelihood. Workers must sacrifice for an austerity program arbitrarily imposed by government and industrial leaders. Similarly, the austerity program is being instrumentalized to quiet protest against ecological destruction, poor working conditions, and job cutbacks. Production needs are placed above sane and healthy living.

State collusion with big business and corrupt labor unions to keep workers under control for maintaining austerity has been satisfactorily documented.[19] As is the case with labor and the Democratic Party in the U.S., most if not all the labor leaders are members of the SPD. Hence, they actively cooperate with the state and industry to bar radical organizers from unions, factories, schools, and other large institutions. Almost all the leading unions, particularly the DGB (*Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund*) and the major teaching union GEW (*Gewerkschaft für Erziehung und Wissenschaft*) have pledged to purge themselves in accordance with the state's guidelines for *Berufsverbot*. Thus, even if workers are not civil servants, there is a high likelihood that they will lose employment if it can be proven that they have ever been involved in radical political activities or have sympathized with reform movements.

In order to carry out and help all public and private institutions with internal political repression, an immense bureaucratic and police effort has been mobilized. Therefore, the budgets of the various sections of the surveillance network received huge increases between 1969 and 1975.[20] Over 900 million marks, or 400 million dollars are now allocated for "internal security," and this figure has been rising sharply.[21] The quantitative growth of the police force has not matched the increase in the crime rate. Nor has police training been improved to protect citizens but rather to curtail their liberties. Most of the new personnel, equipment, and technology have been employed in surveillance and internal security. New weaponry, spying devices, prisons, and investigative methods have been developed to oppose mass political resistance.

The expansion of police control of criminals to control ordinary citizens has increased rapidly with technological aids. For instance, by introducing electronic systems for compiling data and establishing a centralized computer with a network of inquiry terminals, the Federal Investigation Department was able to provide complete records for criminals, suspects, and subversives. Aside from its actual preventive purpose, i.e., its training in preparation to fight anticipated mass movements, the police must also create enemies of the Constitution and foster fear, suspicion, and

19. See L. Ziegenbalg, ed., *Gewerkschaften und Arbeiterklasse* (Munich, 1971); Eberhard Schmidt, *Ordnungsfaktor oder Gegenmacht: Die politische Rolle der Gewerkschaften* (Frankfurt am Main, 1971); Reinhard Krusche and Dagmar Pfeiffer, "Probleme der Gewerkschaftspolitik 1945-1965," in *Die Linke im Rechtsstaat*, Vol. 1 (Berlin, 1976), pp. 139-158.

20. See Albrecht Funk and Falko Werkentin, "Materialen zur Entwicklung des innerstaatlichen Gewaltapparates," *links*, 73 (January 1976), pp. 45-48.

21. See also Cobler, *Die Gefahr geht von den Menschen aus*, pp. 127-127.

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crime if it is to have a rationale for existing. Thus, West Germany must show to the world and its own people that it can keep dissenters in their place. Political prisoners have been treated in such a brutal manner that Amnesty International has raised its voice in protest. Ruthless house searches are conducted in Gestapo-like manner.[22] Even Nobel Prize winner Heinrich Böll was subjected to a questionable police search and public defamation. Bookstores are constantly raided and harassed for selling political material. Strong-arm governmental tactics are used in settling labor disputes. The radical ecology movement has been a particular target of police and industry for fear that new nuclear plants may not be constructed.[23] The investigating of hundreds of thousands of so-called "enemies of the Constitution" during the last few years has given the police ample justification for augmenting its power. In fact, the police files and methods are so secretive that members of the government are not privy to its records and also live in fear that they may be investigated and arbitrarily charged with disloyalty. As in the U.S., this growth of the official police is paralleled by the creation of a private police industry. The threat of sabotage at large industrial plants has led to the employment of large private police forces. Banks, department stores, and other private enterprises have hired police and bought electronic equipment to control workers and customers. Bodyguards are in great demand by industrial entrepreneurs and politicians. Yet, the fear of being attacked, robbed and harassed has not abated. Instead, it is increasing and is intended to increase to create a demand for more law and order, more control and regulation.

The exemplary lesson of political repression in West Germany is not driven home to the masses directly by the police itself. Rather, its main impact comes from the state-oriented consciousness industry which pervades every aspect of the socialization process. Maintained by the long tradition of rule from above by "well-meaning rulers," the power of the consciousness industry has effectively kept progressive intellectuals separated from the working class, enabling the more conservative civil servants to act cohesively for the realization of state capitalist interests. Not only have the areas of socialization been carefully regulated with periodic purges to cleanse the government, schools, universities, mass media, and national services of radicals, but the depletion of the everyday life of the German citizenry, the dilution of vital and meaningful cultural forms of expression, has also incapacitated their creative subjectivity. Existence assumes banal forms because the individual is made into an extension of the state. Formal laws and orders take precedence over the individual

22. See *Computerized Surveillance*, pamphlet number 2 of the *Campaign against the Model West Germany*, and the four volumes of *Dokumente* published recently by the Aktionskomitee gegen Berufsverbote an der Freien Universität Berlin, 1 Berlin 33, Ihnestraas 21. The evidence is massive and easily accessible in most of the progressive and left newspapers and journals, including *Der Spiegel*. In 1971-72, a communication and information network named INPOL was established, and a special NADIS computer system was created to keep track of the radical left. Since the police use the computer system to make security checks on most people who work for the government or in areas sensitive to internal security, it is estimated that data has been gathered by the police on millions of innocent citizens, and this data may be distributed and used as the police see fit. Police terminals and cars are being fully equipped with new electronic devices and computers to assist them in keeping track of "suspected criminals," i.e., anyone they suspect. At all the borders of West Germany, the entrances and exits to West Berlin, and all depots of public transportation, police controls have become a regularity and have been made more effective through technological devices.

23. See "Kernkfraftwerke: Rest vom Rest vom Rest," *Der Spiegel* (October 24, 1977), p. 105, and Roland Roth, "Kalkar—Ein politischer Erfolg in düsteren Zeiten," *links*, 92 (October 1977), pp. 1, 3-4.

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subjective needs and feelings. Since individuals have been banalized and bureaucratized, they act in behalf of abstract laws and no longer relate to human beings and human concerns. Hannah Arendt has termed this condition as "the banality of evil," which certainly characterizes the way that West Germans police themselves and worship law and order above their own needs.

It is well-known that the rightist Springer Press controls 80% of the daily and weekly publications in Hamburg and Berlin and 24% in the rest of West Germany.[24] Other conservative publishing magnates along with the powerful official papers of the SPD, CDU-DSU, and FDP complete the domination of the publishing industry. In addition, most radio broadcasting and telecasting is state-owned while the cinema industry is controlled by profit-making enterprises notorious for their poor films and conservatism. In short, we are dealing with a powerful mass-media monopoly which through the state and private agencies conveys normative signs and develops formal structures which further political repression.

The general rhetoric used by the conservative mass media, when unchallenged by radical or socialist groups, precludes any form of rational or democratic discourse supporting emancipation from atavistic principles of social organization. In particular, the mass media's creation of false enemies through images that foster fear cripples the awareness of the average German citizen. Fear of communism when it is projected solely as totalitarianism; fear of protest when it is projected as criminal or violent; fear of foreigners when they are projected as threats to high standards of living; fear of alternative life-styles when they are projected as the nefarious designs of unruly utopian dreamers; fear of socialist teachers when they are projected as terrorists or subversive sympathizers—all projections of such fear through the mass media allow for greater mass intimidation. Thus, through governmental and private manipulation the masses are led to see themselves as the actual legislators of repressive laws necessary for protecting their own security.

On May 1, 1976, the state passed Paragraph 88a, a new law meant to strengthen its

24. See John Sandford, *The Mass Media of German-speaking Countries* (London, 1976), pp. 31-37.

25. *How to Burn Books without Getting your Fingers Dirty,'* No. 3 of the pamphlets *Campaign against the Model West Germany* published by the Evangelische Studentengemeinde (Bochum, 1976), p. 6. Paragraph 88a of the enacted criminal law stipulates that "it is a criminal offense punishable with a fine or sentence up to three years for any person who (1) distributes, (2) openly displays, posts, demonstrates or makes accessible in any other way, or (3) produces, subscribes to, delivers, stores, offers, announces, recommends one of the following unlawful acts as stated in Paragraph 126: (1) disturbing the peace in special (e.g., armed) cases; (2) a murder, manslaughter or genocide; (3) purposely causing bodily injury or poisoning; (4) a criminal act restricting personal freedom (e.g., blackmail); (5) a robbery or extortion; (6) a generally dangerous deed involving arson, offences involving explosives, endangering air, rail, or sea traffic, flooding, poisoning wells; (7) a generally dangerous deed involving the destruction of public utilities such as railroad, postal services, public transport, destruction of telephone communication systems, destruction of important works such as waterworks." This paragraph has additional impact when coupled with Paragraph 129 of the criminal law regarding criminal organization. This law states that any person who founds an organization directed toward committing those offences or any person who takes part in such an organization as a member, recruiting for it, or supporting it, will be punished with a sentence of up to five years or with a heavy fine. Federal authorities assume that store owners who display political newspapers or books automatically identify with and support the positions taken in the publications. Whether the book dealers are familiar with the content of these materials is not important. The sale of a paper produced by a so-called criminal organization is enough to accuse the book dealer of offences under Paragraph 88a and 129, i.e., to accuse the bookdealer of supporting a "criminal organization."

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control of national consciousness and further intimidate anyone who thinks critically.[25] Interesting is the manner in which the state has executed this legislation. On August 18, 1976, at six in the morning the police invaded the private homes of managers and owners of bookstores in Bochum, Berlin, Heidelberg, Munich, Cologne, Tübingen, and Hamburg. A total of 10 bookshops, one distributor and numerous apartments were searched. The authorities set themselves up as experts to determine what publication or book might be criminally and politically subversive. Such books as W.A. Wittfogel's *The History of China, Marxism and Economy*, Fritz Sternberg's *Fascists in Power*, a collection of essays entitled *Social Revolution and City Guerrillas* and numerous other books which can be found in most university libraries were confiscated—even though there is no list of forbidden books.[26]

Such scare tactics encourage private firms and the television and radio broadcasting bureaucracy to purge themselves of progressive thinkers, or at least to silence them. This illustrates how the state will stop at nothing to tighten its control over the mass media and to depoliticize the bourgeois public sphere so that alternative forms of self-determination are not even considered. Categorical imperatives which bind citizens to these arbitrary forms of government are communicated and reinforced in the sign complexes and social organization of the mass media.[27] The images and words teach *not to reflect, not to act*, but to accept the status quo by supporting police programs for internal security.

Thus, the mass support for *Berufsverbot* must not be interpreted as an unwillingness on the part of the German populace to act democratically but as a consequence of massive indoctrination. For the past two years the federal government has called on the citizenry to become "police agents" to help track down all criminals, particularly suspected terrorists. One of the most popular TV programs in Germany involves the advertisement of criminal suspects and the posting of rewards for those in the audience who help apprehend these suspects. After the recent terrorist killing of the industrialist Hanns Martin Schleyer, the government again asked German citizens to turn themselves into police agents to protect internal security and the basic democratic order.

Clearly, social banalization and political repression have been compounded by the terrorist activities of the Baader-Meinhof Group. They have killed a total of twelve people including three well-known industrialists, a banker and several policemen. Their most recent murder of Schleyer, the President of the West German Industrialists' Association, along with the hijacking of a Lufthansa airplane by Palestinian allies on October 13, created an atmosphere of near hysteria in Bonn and other parts of West Germany. With each new sensational terrorist incident, the government has increased its police force and tightened political repression.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 17. Citation of the *Frankfurter Rundschau* (September 6, 1976). In a related incident, a book about the Haymarket affair in Chicago, published by the Wagenbach Publishing House, was confiscated in numerous bookstores in West Germany. The reason given for this confiscation was as follows: "This book contains descriptions as to how explosives can be produced with the help of dynamite and how these can be used against wealthy idlers, the military force, the police force and Pinkertons." *Haymarket*, written by Horst Karasek in 1975, is actually a historical work about anarchists of German descent living in Chicago in 1886. It is a documentary report about the struggles for the eight-hour work day and about the well-known classical case of judicial murder of eight anarchists, most of them German immigrants. Obviously, Wagenbach, who is being prosecuted by the state, was singled out as an example to scare publishers and bookstore owners to discipline themselves and implement the government's law and order policies.

27. For a good study of how this works in the United States as well, see Herbert I. Schiller, *The Mind Managers* (Boston, 1973).

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Furthermore, the terrorist acts have not shown to the masses that the terrorists are in any way victims of any social and economic exploitation or that they seek to help oppressed groups. On the contrary, public polls taken after the Schleyer kidnapping revealed that a majority of the people was in favor of reinstituting the death sentence, creating more stringent anti-terrorism laws and increasing police power. With few exceptions, the mass media has painted a gory picture of the terrorists as Nazi gangsters. Furthermore, many intellectuals, writers and public figures such as Heinrich Böll and Günter Grass, the theologians Heinrich Albertz and Helmut Gollwitzer, and even ex-chancellor Willy Brandt himself have been linked with the terrorists.[28]

The smear campaign by conservative politicians has been reinforced by the mass media which has generally insisted on the need for more control against "enemies of the Constitution." In addition, the roots of contemporary terrorism have also been located in the APO movement of the 1960s—specifically in the split among SDS activists. By 1969 one faction of SDS decided that more action and even terror was needed to further the revolution while the majority of SDS and most other organizations opted for "the long march through the institutions" to bring about socialism. That most leftists have never proposed nor supported terror is systematically de-emphasized by the mass media. Instead, the responsibility for terrorism is attributed to the socialist movement as a whole, especially to university intellectuals and civil servants who are said to sympathize with the terrorists' cause. But the terrorists' cause has never been examined for what it is—the deformed, depoliticized struggle of desperate individuals who seek social change and who, in fact, serve to strengthen the authoritarian state. Terrorism prevents various action groups from taking the initiative in setting up viable forms of a counter public sphere. Like the state, these terrorists act as self-appointed guardians who arbitrarily use force to bring about a socialist revolution from above. Ultimately, their actions reveal that they also have been infected by the West German authoritarian conditioning.

Indeed, the terrorists' terror actually emanates from the state, and it provides further grounds for intensifying political repression. Just as unemployment is structurally manipulated by the state to keep dissident workers in line by instilling economic insecurity among the populace, so terrorism results from the legalization of political repression used to threaten and punish opponents who seek to establish alternatives to the depoliticized public sphere. Basically, a state that depends on political repression and tight control of the mass media needs terrorists to legitimate its arbitrary actions. Historically, this has always been the case in West Germany. Terror makes no sense to a people who may feel the effects of the state's legitimation crisis but who have been conditioned to fear the slightest alteration of the social fabric and to police themselves for the good of the state. At this point, terror can only destroy the in-roads of those progressive groups who had partially succeeded in entering the civil service and educational institutions to offer new alternative ways of thinking to the younger generation.

28. See the series on terrorism in the fall issues of *Der Spiegel*. In particular, see "Mord beginnt beim bösen Wort," *Der Spiegel*, 41 (1977), pp. 28-47, and Diana Johnstone, "Nazi Past Looms over Terrorists and their Victims," *In These Times* (October 5-11, 1977), p. 18. Johnstone reports that in a CDU meeting in Lower Saxony on September 11, 1977, party theoretician Kurt Biedenkpf stated: "Not only the terrorists are guilty. Those responsible for the situation we are in are the so-called liberals and left-wing intellectuals, whose only thought is to create insecurity in the population and to destroy the freedom-loving instincts in our society." In addition, the CDU Prime Minister of Lower Saxony asserted that "the real problem is not the terrorists but rather their sympathizers."

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THE PARIS CONFERENCE ON SELF-MANAGEMENT

by Sharon Zukin

The Second International Conference on Participation, Workers' Control and Self-management, held in Paris last September 7 to 10, drew representatives of 28 countries, most of whom—except for a sizable dual delegation of "official" and "unofficial" Yugoslavs—came from the capitalist core of Western Europe and the United States.[1] While these participants were well versed in the classical texts and the historical experiences of the revolutionary movement, they could not avoid some of the classic radical disputes. This does not mean that the conference's basic solidarity was fractured by doctrinal conflicts. But, from time to time, the conference discussion faltered over the methodological and political problems which jeopardize the whole self-management undertaking as simultaneously a movement for radical social change, the implementation or practice of certain political theories, and the development of such theories themselves.

First, the question arose of whose interests and whose desires the mostly intellectual conference participants represented. About half the participants were sociologists, and even those who were affiliated with "the workers' movement" came mainly from research positions in labor union offices. Second, despite near unanimity among the participants about the desirability of self-management for moral, political, and—for a few people—pragmatic reasons, there was the usual disagreement about how soon such change could be effected, and about whether the change would seep down from the macro-level of a revolutionary regime or infiltrate the society at large from the micro-level of individual enterprises or even work units. Discussions often foundered, at least momentarily, on whether self-management is possible only in a "socialist" context, or whether it can exist authentically as "islands" in a capitalist society. At a third, more implicit level, the participants seemed to be troubled by the lack of a living model of self-management. On the one hand, there are plenty of failed or suppressed historical precedents in the Paris Commune and revolutionary workers' councils throughout Western And Eastern Europe. On the other hand, the only existing referents for the self-management idea are, on the global level, Yugoslavia (and partially Algeria and Peru) and, in the limited area of economic decision making, some experiments within enterprises in various capitalist countries. But neither of these referents can be generalized into a model of the self-management idea. Just as the political problems of Yugoslavia (e.g. continued centralization and bureaucratization, the conformity demanded with the leading role of the party) curdle the desire, in some quarters, to identify this country as the embodiment of the self-management idea,[2] so the managerial and political manipulation of participatory experiments in other countries prevents the generalization of self-management on that basis. Finally, in the background of the conference, the issue of self-management in the 1978 French

1. There were 324 participants in all. See the official conference report "Chercheurs sur l'autogestion: Chercheurs en autogestion? by Jacqueline Pluet, in Jean Duvignaud et al., *Qui a peur de l'autogestion?* (Paris, forthcoming).

2. Dissatisfaction with the handling of these problems in Yugoslavia surfaced several times during the conference. In fact, the pre-history of the conference included moving the conference site from Yugoslavia to France for this reason. Of course, it is problematic for the Yugoslavs, as the beacon of self-management, to be held up to the glaring light of their ideal.

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elections dramatized the dialectic between the immediacy of politics to the conference topic and the distance of this group of participants from mass political influence.

Self-Management as Movement

Expressed most clearly by the French organizers of and participants in the conference (notably the group around the journal *Autogestion et socialisme*), the self-management idea represents a chance to realize an anti-authoritarian socialism which owes nothing in practice to either Stalin or Mao and little in theory to Lenin. This tendency finds its precedent in the workers' council stream of revolutionary history and in mass rather than elite, i.e., party, initiatives in the writings of Luxemburg, Gramsci, and Pannekoek, as well as the work of French anti-Stalinists like the *Socialisme ou barbarie* group. The movement which is generated by these ideas antedates both the 1968 events and the regeneration of the Socialist Party (SP).[3] However, in terms of the current, pre-election, political discourse in France, the self-management idea permits a group of non-party intellectuals to remain both generally Marxist and humanist. Thus, implicitly, they combat the role of "nouvelle philosophe" in the campaign by expressing the possibility that a vote for the Left is not tantamount to a vote for Gulag. This puts them in a dependent position vis-a-vis the Socialist Party, which has utilized the idea of self-management in its party platform for the last few years without making precise plans for its implementation.[4]

In this light it is interesting to consider the comments of two mainstream Leftists, sociologist Alain Touraine and Robert Chapuis, a member of the PS national secretariat, at a roundtable discussion during the Paris conference. For Touraine, self-management represents not so much the impetus for a practical program as a continual inspirational idea. Chapuis, pressed by questions about the PS's intentions concerning self-management, was very vague. Thus one may wonder, in general, whether a radical social transformation such as that implied by the self-management idea can ever be implemented through electoral politics. Specifically, one may doubt whether the PS is strongly committed to the de-etatization and independence from the capitalist mode of production that the idea of self-management demands. In her conference report, Pluet (the official *rapporteur*) even says, "I admit that it's rare, and for that reason enjoyable, to hear [at the conference] about the withering away of the State, while in the Leftist or extreme-Left political vocabulary in France there is talk only etatization, nationalization, taking power over the State, centralism (democratic), etc..."

Because of their historical consciousness, their implicit role in French electoral

3. If we situate the French movement for self-management around the founding of *Autogestion et socialisme* by Yvon Bourdet and others in 1966, then we can relate it to various initiatives in Eastern Europe and the unresponsiveness of the French Communist Party. A member of the current editorial borad, Olivier Corpet, is writing a "sociology of self-management" in France.

4. In a talk at Columbia University on October 31, Bourdet spoke of the PCF's opportunism in slowly swinging around to the self-management slogan in order to win voters back from the PS Yet such opportunism may differ only in degree from that of the PS, which has appealed to a heterogeneous collection of the ethnically, sexually, and ecologically aggrieved. This strategy allows the PS to circumvent the organized labor movement, which is dominated by the PCF. Of course, as Bourdet points out, the recent, partial PCF approval of "some form of self-management" envisages control by the existing labor unions in each enterprise. That would permit the PCF to retain control over this segment of the population as well as to extend its control over the new institutional initiatives of self-management.

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politics, and their willingness to maintain a certain ideological distance from all revolutionary regimes which combine self-management organizational forms and authoritarian politics, the French group seems to be working toward a "developed country" focus for the self-management idea. This is not the easiest path to forge. It accentuates, on the one hand, the divisions between European parliamentary democracy and Third World revolutionary regimes, between authoritarian socialism-in-power and democratic socialism-out-of-power; it accentuates, on the other hand, the dependence on the Socialist Party. The combination puts the self-management movement in a position of eternal idealism, between abhorrence of the actual and attraction to the potential practice of self-management. Moreover, the creation of a developed country focus for the self-management idea risks "explaining"—hence, justifying—the abuse of or the failure to implement real self-management in non-Western societies. Indeed, at another of the conference's roundtable discussions, the Hungarian sociologist Andras Hegedus commented that self-management does not really "belong" in the East European context. Politically and historically, this would seem to be surrendering a lot. Methodologically, this stance once again implies the uniqueness of the West European historical experience. It also poses the question of what effect the genesis of self-management, e.g. if it is "chosen" through electoral politics or if it is imposed by a revolutionary regime, will have on its implementation. So far, the restriction of self-management practice to the latter case does not permit us to pre-judge the significance of the East-West distinction.

General Questions

Although the six working groups at the conference[5] covered many specific topics, four general questions emerged both in individual sessions and in the common meetings: (1) Under what conditions can self-management really be practiced; (2) Why don't workers demand self-management; (3) What is the relation between self-management and power; and (4) What is the effect of the transnational economy on self-management. It should also be noted that the conference participants stressed the terminological ambiguities of "self-management," which was found to contain echoes of management or administration and so to evoke the administration of things rather than people. Nor was "self-government" considered an improvement, for it has been used in political discourse to refer to such phenomena as colonial wars, home rule, and decentralization. For the English speakers at the conference, perhaps because of its foreign flavor, the word *autogestion* seemed likely to resolve the difficulties—at least, until the French speakers pointed out that *autogestion*, too connotes management and hence suggests change merely in the economic sphere of social relations or on the micro-level of the enterprise. Clearly, both the outright capitalist expropriation of the self-management idea in "participation" and the Bolshevik reference in "workers' control" avoid these ambiguities, but these terms are also steeped in associations that the movement for self-management does not want to stress.[6]

5. These six working groups (and the number of participants in each) included: Political Conditions for Generalized Self-management (57), The Workers' Movement and Self-management (30), Democratization of Enterprises (118), Planning and Self-management (45), Self-management and the Organization of Space and Communities, Regions and Minorities (16), Culture, Human Needs and Self-management, including Education and Information (32).

6. In an effort to cut off such discussion, I pointed out that the difficulties are inherent not only in the term but in the concept itself. Even in Yugoslavia, where years of practice would certainly have called for terminological clarification, the Serbo-Croatian *samoupravljanje* refers to both economic and political governance, on both the micro-level of the enterprise and the

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Self-Management as Practice

The practice of self-management within capitalist and social-democratic societies proved so problematic for the conference participants that they were divided on the question of whether what is actually practiced changes the society or helps to maintain the *status quo*. In Sweden, for example, the unions which press for self-management—in terms of a greater role for the worker in investment decisions and greater workplace autonomy—are not "radical" unions. They do not envision a completely self-managing society. Moreover, the efforts to decrease alienation, in symptomatic forms of absenteeism, drunkenness, and absent-minded work habits, by devices such as job rotation and small work teams, appear as mechanisms to harness the workers more effectively to a higher productivity standard. Whether they are working for the current capitalist owners or for the eventual union owners, as is foreseen in Sweden, the workers will not manage their enterprises directly, but through their unions and managerial cadres. In the Federal Republic of Germany the co-determination (*Mitbestimmung*) system of industrial decision making is perpetuating alienation because the workers' participation is mediated by the established labor unions. Furthermore, the policies which emerge from the co-determination process—which must be ratified, in any case, by a "second tier" of owners and managers—are not totally different in their effect from those policies which are derived from pluralistic politics and collective bargaining in the United States. That is, the German system tolerates unemployment, dismissals in the interests of greater productivity, authoritarian social relations, and continued managerial predominance.

Although this issue did not arise in the conference discussion, it is also worth noting that the LIP case, which has been admired as an example of worker-initiated self-management in North America, does not strike the French self-management movement as a model for self-management.[7] Despite the workers' efforts to keep their factory running from 1974, when the Swiss corporate owner decided to shut it down, until 1977, when the workers exhausted their final legal recourse in the French courts,[8] their constant attempts during this period to find a capitalist who would buy the factory apparently negate the self-management idea. But surely it is short-sighted to deny ideological legitimacy to the LIP case. The workers' self reliance, in the face of the initial passivity and even the hostility of their union representatives, contrasts favorably with the failure of most American workers, e.g., the workers at the former Reingold and Schaeffer breweries in Brooklyn, to consider such a course. Furthermore, it was rational for the LIP workers—isolated and blocked at every turn by the punitive reactions of both the French government and other enterprises—to seek a traditional source of capital. Given the integration of watch-making within diversified, multi-national corporations, as well as the competition from Swiss and Japanese watches, it is hard to determine whether in this case self-management demanded self-sufficiency. Similar examples were given by several Canadian participants at the conference. In Canada, too, worker-run factories have encountered severely negative reactions from both government and privately owned enterprises. In those conditions, they have appealed to labor unions for capital. Still, the most common response to a factory's imminent demise remains aggrieved passivity.

Faced with the problems, on the one hand, of the Swedish and West German systems

macro-level of the global society, and also connotes administration or management. This intervention did not end the discussion.

7. Yvon Bourdet, personal communication.
8. See *Le Monde*, September 14, 1977.

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and, on the other hand, of worker-run factories such as LIP, the conference participants asked whether such "islands" of self-management can really exist when they are surrounded by a capitalist national society and a capitalist world system. Because of the conference's generally non-sectarian commitment to self-management (as well as the anti-dogmatic tendency which is inherent in the self-management movement),[9] there was no desire for confrontation on this issue. However, several contrasting perspectives were introduced. Participants from countries such as West Germany, Sweden, and Israel, which practice various forms of self-management, suggested that such forms help to maintain the social system by co-opting or otherwise incorporating workers into the dominant society. Whether we can attribute this incorporation to the far-sighted strategy of industrial owners and or managers, to the social psychology of participation, or to organizational dynamics, has yet to be determined. However, the accumulating research on self-management and participation suggests that such factors as the size of the self-managing unit, the degree of latitude and control that technocrats and political cadres are permitted, and the scope of issues which are subject to self-managed decision making also affect the success or failure of self-management.[10] While these things undoubtedly are important, they may really be secondary to certain structural factors which, though external to self-management, necessarily impinge on its practice. Thus the more significant determinants of the success or failure of self-management probably include the relative levels of capitalization of self-managing units, the relative material levels of self-managers, and the mediation of self-managing relations by organizations such as labor unions. In a socialist society, for example, the unions assume certain new functions—notably, rationalizing the work process and projecting a utopian image—which must be countered by the self-management organs.[11]

In contrast to the view of self-management as a system-maintaining mechanism, other conference participants argued that islands of self-management within a capitalist society fulfill a system-transforming function.[12] For example, within an individual, self-managed enterprise, workers with no previous managerial experience learn that they can perform in new, challenging roles; as they become more experienced, they build up the competence and the confidence that are necessary to challenge established authorities. Similarly, data on self-management and participation indicate that, with increasing participation, workers develop a greater awareness of and an interest in larger social areas.[13] But these data cannot answer three

9. There were very few participants who did not share a socialist perspective, and these few were moderately disturbed by discussion about the incompatibility of self-management and capitalism. For these people, decreasing alienation and increasing self-control at the workplace were the objectives which had drawn them to the conference.

10. It is interesting that a factor such as size was considered significant in the working group on democratization of enterprises but not in the group on regions and minorities. Perhaps it would be easier to determine criteria for the success of self-management if the theoretical problems were resolved, especially the questions of whether successful self-management implies system-transformation, and what the system—whether capitalist or socialist—is supposed to be transformed into. Of course, resolving these questions in terms of the self-management idea does not directly influence the practice of self-management.

11. The change in union functions under self-management, which is my own topic, represents a way of analyzing the mediation of social and political relations by the socialist state. The paper of Guy Desolre (Belgium) referred to the process of *instrumentalisation*, by which the possible countervailing power or autonomous power represented by workers' councils in Eastern Europe—in contrast to the power of labor unions—is subverted, manipulated, and ultimately suppressed by the state.

12. Notably the paper by Gerry Hunnius (Canada).

13. Yugoslav data show that this increased attention to larger social issues focuses more on

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questions which are essential to any assessment of self-management as a means of radical social change: first, whether such individual changes as an increase in the sense of efficacy and a wider social awareness can be aggregated; second, in what form--a mass movement, a massive incorporation, or a change in mass culture—such aggregation will occur; and, third, whether the potential radical change will be a gigantic transformation of consciousness or authority. In relation to these problems, the self-management movement likes to think of self-management as a countervailing rather than either a co-opted or a coercive power. However, this seems possible only if one can imagine a prolonged situation of opposition in which the organizational forms of self-management would remain both committed to workers' interests and impervious to institutionalized mediation by party, labor union, or state.

Long-range system-transformation through self-management also suggests a scenario in which self-management practices are not isolated from the rest of society or threatened with suppression by the state. As Americans know, "decentralization" has one meaning when it connotes defending the interests of existing state units(e.g., in Nixon's revenue-sharing ideas), but it assumes quite a different meaning when it is practiced, as in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, as "community control." Again, the issue of the general social context would appear to be decisive in determining whether self-management practice would have a system-transforming or a system-maintaining function.

Self-Management as Demand

The second question which perplexed conference participants was why most workers' movements do not initiate demands for self-management. Even when workers have demanded self-management, e.g., during Prague Spring or the French events of May 1968, they typically have entered the general outburst later than other social groups. Once self-management has been formalized, as in the workers' councils which were briefly established in Czechoslovakia in the mid-sixties, the seats are predominantly filled by professional and managerial cadres. This holds true in the institutionalization of self-management in Yugoslavia. Thus the idea of self-management seems to appeal more to intellectuals and professionals than to ordinary workers. Certainly, one may evoke such theories as the hierarchy of needs or the historical repression of behavior associated with workers' control of the work process in favor of demands which are restricted to work conditions or work compensation. But this still does not resolve the problem of why intellectuals claim the right of self-management for workers when workers do not demand it for themselves. In comparison, it is easy to understand that the organized workers' movement, i.e., labor unions, is uneasy with the idea of self-management because it threatens the unions' loss of control over the workers.

However, various conference papers and discussions make it possible to begin piecing together an idea of the conditions in which workers do demand self-management. First, it was suggested that workers may be "radicalized" by conditions external to their work conditions to protest in ways which are not sanctioned by their unions, e.g., through wildcat strikes, and to expand the working-class ideology through the idea of self-management. This apparently describes the situation in Sweden at the end of the 1960s, when—in the light of general economic and social development, the increasing

the national than the local political level. This is similar to the salience of national over local politics in the United States. What, then, is the effect of self-management on social consciousness? Two variables from more conventional studies of political participation—*salience* and *context*—should probably be introduced into the analysis.

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concentration of industry, the growing rationalization of the work process, the acceptance of social reforms not related to labor, and the expansion of the educational system—workers had reached a historical turning point. The workers' discontent pressed the unions to make qualitatively different demands on the state (through their political party) and the employers. These new demands centered on union participation in all phases of industrial decision making. Thus, since 1970, Swedish unions have considered that they are steadily realizing self-management.[14] In contrast to this view of radicalization from outside work life, a Danish participant indicated that, in that country, the level of technology and the organization of the work process in certain industries, e.g., printing and metallurgy, were conducive to demand for self-management. Thus the terms of analysis in this case do not differ much from the discussion in the field of labor history of change, over time, in strike demands.

For the second situation in which workers demand self-management, one may consider the examples of groups of workers who, faced with unemployment through the closing down of their factories, seize the means of production and continue manufacturing on their own. In this case, self-management appears as a last resort after the workers have exhausted their institutional appeals (e.g., through unions and courts) and have been abandoned by traditional sources of capital (e.g., the individual factory-owner, the corporate owner, the welfare state). As the discussion of the LIP case suggested, not all workers in this situation demand self-management, although nearly always their unions do *not* choose self-management. So one would still have to explain why some workers do and other workers do not choose self-management. It is interesting in this connection that a researcher on self-management in Great Britain briefly mentioned, in addition to the factors that have already been discussed, the presence of charismatic leaders who push for self-management.

The third set of conditions in which workers demand self-management refers to the often-noted correlation between a revolutionary situation and workers' councils.

The fourth situation in which workers come to demand self-management is during moments of crisis in post-revolutionary societies. This situation differs from the spontaneous mass uprising surrounding the collapse of an old social system, as in Russia in 1917, or even the aftermath of World War II in Eastern Europe. The newer demand for self-management is more sophisticated, more disillusioned, more concerned with concrete issues of control that with slogans. Just as the attempt to form workers' councils in Hungary and Poland in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1967-68 signals a crisis of ideological hegemony in the post-revolutionary regime, so the effort to make these councils independent of all mediation by state, party, and labor union—whether or not these had, in the meantime, been "reformed"—indicates a crisis of political organization. It is anticipated that these crises will re-occur and will continue to provoke demands for self-management in the form of workers' councils, even if those demands initially emerge, as in Czechoslovakia, from the managerial ranks rather than the rank-and-file.[15]

The comparison of specific situations in which workers have demanded self-management still requires analysis. The first generalization which can be drawn is that the modern demand for self-management neither arises spontaneously nor inheres in any working class. Even demands for control over the work process have historically arisen not out of any idealism but in response to the tightening of labor discipline.

14. See remarks by Lars Erik Karlsson (Sweden).
15. See paper by Guy Desolare and intervention by Vladimir Fisera (England).

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Always mixed in with the demand for self-management is a combination of other issues, e.g., consumers' complaints, as in Poland, or impending unemployment, as in LIP. This suggests that, in contrast to the intellectuals' demand for self-management in terms of socialist humanism, the workers' demand for self-management has a strong connection with self-interest.

Self-Management and Power

The third general theme of the conference concerned the relation between self-management and power. This was considered in two ways: the predominance of specific groups within self-management practice and the role of the state vis-a-vis self-management. In terms of the specific power relations of groups of participants within self-management organs, this becomes a straightforward empirical question. As such, it has inspired much research, all of which substantiates the continued predominance of technocratic personnel and technocratic criteria in decision making. This occurs regardless of the conditions under which self-management is chosen, demanded, or imposed, and despite certain associations, at least in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, with socialist humanism.[16] While in a capitalist context this situation requires neither explanation nor apology, in a socialist context it eventually calls for some official justification. Generally, such justification is based on either an idealistic or a historical materialist fallacy. That is, continued technocratic predominance is justified in terms of either an insufficiently developed participatory consciousness (defined cognitively, attitudinally, and behaviorally) among the ordinary workers,[17] or an insufficiently developed economic base (the "scarcity" thesis). To some degree, both conditions are valid. On the one hand, individual reluctance to manage one's self or one's enterprise cannot be shifted overnight. On the other hand, as a Yugoslav once said, in conditions of extreme national poverty, self-management looks like a pack of dogs fighting over a bone.

Nevertheless, these two explanations may really obscure two more fundamental problems. First, it is a mystification to project self-management as a harmonious, conflict-free forum of disinterested self-managers. It is unreasonable to expect that self-management, unlike other forms of collective behavior such as strikes, will not be arenas of confrontation. Thus the practice of self-management will continue to show the tensions of differential power relations. Indeed, the attempt to negate this situation constitutes a contradiction in the Yugoslav practice of self-management.

The second problem arises from the lack of a theoretical understanding of the relation between self-management and particular modes of production. Specifically, how can self-management be practiced in the capital-intensive system of industrial production which dominates the international economy? This question has been subsumed, and therefore repressed, under other rubrics, e.g., critiques of technocracy, bureaucracy, and market socialism, but each of these categories affords only a partial view of the problem. If proponents of self-management want to resolve the relation between self-management and power, then they must first analyze the entire mode of production which determines this relation. To some degree, they have mystified self-management by projecting it as a mode of production in itself (*viz.* "the self-managed society").

16. See discussion at the first and third working sessions of the conference, e.g., the paper by Miso Jezernik (Yugoslavia).

17. That is, workers do not yet have enough expertise, they lack the desire to participate, and they shy away from the level of commitment that self-management demands.

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Nor does the self-management movement confront the contradiction between the idea of self-management and the possibility that its practice requires conditions which can be guaranteed only by a strong state. How does such a contradiction arise? In terms of its associations with both Marxism and humanism, the idea of self-management implies, to some degree, the withering away of the state. Furthermore, the constraints on the practice of self-management which are imposed by state mediation in political, economic, and social relations indicate that state power is incompatible with self-management. Nonetheless, the idea of self-management also implies a parity, or some sort of rough equality, between the components of a self-management system. In practice, parity translates into "mutual respect," and the mutual respect of decentralized units often degenerates into competition instead of cooperation, autarchy instead of autonomy, and the monopolization of scarce resources and capital in lieu of solidarity. As noted, people have tended to blame factors like etatism or market socialism. But such criticism is off target. First, not all state power is tantamount to etatism. Second, it is precisely the coercion exercised by the state which may inhibit those relations *between* self-management units which are most destructive of self-management *within* these units. In Yugoslavia, for example, the market in itself maintains traditional regional, class, and economic sector inequalities; it is the central state—to the degree that Yugoslavia has one—which compels at least the partial circulation of capital between self-managing units. Another example concerns the probability that, in a socialist context, some services will be priced below cost to make them widely available. This requires operating subsidies. But who will finance these subsidies? Again, the resolution depends on a power external to that of the self-managing unit.

These observations suggest that the idea of self-management contains a paradox: while a self-managing unit seems to epitomize the quintessential situation of the social contract, its practice of self-management can be sustained only by a prior social contract which assures its survival, especially by guaranteeing it capital. This problem must be confronted by the self-management movement. Ironically, while the movement criticizes Yugoslavia for its handling of some of these problems, it is only there that the problems have been identified and discussed.

Self-Management and the International Economy

The last general theme which emerged at the conference refers to the effect on self-management of the transnational economy. While everyone noted that the international division of labor, the lack of international solidarity of national labor unions, and the power of multinational corporations were evidently factors which would have some effect on both the demand for and the practice of self-management, no one was ready with an analysis. The only generalization that people were willing to make concerned the apparent cross-national borrowing of strategies to deal with self-management. An important example of this is the "anticipatory strategy" of West European industrialists who, through the European Economic Community, are working out a common plan for institutionalizing workers' participation on the German model in all Common Market countries. When it was suggested, in contrast to such schemes, that the *real* practice of self-management, like any form of labor mobilization, will be constrained by the "core" countries of the international economy, and perhaps limited by them to "peripheral" or "semi-peripheral" areas of the world system and marginal (i.e., negligible or unsuccessful) areas of their own economy, some participants perceived this observation less as an attempt at structural analysis than as

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an example of core-country chauvinism.[18] Possibly the place of self-management within the international economy requires study by international economists, or even —considering the number of times that humanistic experiments are isolated and driven bankrupt—by international monetary experts, rather than by economists who specialize in self-managed plants.

Despite the lack of reports of a theoretical breakthrough, the Paris conference was useful in several ways. First of all, proponents of self-management got a sense of themselves as a growing international movement. Second, it was good to see Yugoslavs of several different orientations discussing their views in public. Third, the exchange of practical information about varous forms of self-management was valuable. Indeed, the conference formalized the creation of an international documentation and coordination center for studies on self-management (CICRA), which should further convey the sense of a self-management movement.[19] There will also be a section of the World Sociology Conference in Uppsala next August devoted to self-management. Perhaps a future agenda can consider the multiple image of self-management that has been developed here. There are obvious differences between self-management as an idea, as a movement, and as a set of practices. Slurring over these differences constitutes a mystification of self-management. Furthermore, as a set of practices, self-management represents a form of collective behavior, a form of labor mobilization, a vehicle of social change or prevention of social change. These aspects of self-management must be clearly distinguished. Finally, a nagging doubt persists that the idea of self-management, rather than representing the lost chord of socialist humanism, really substitutes for a more programmatic socialism which has not yet succeeded.

18. This was my observation, and it was based on (1) the simultaneous existence of different modes of production (*viz.* labor mobilization) in the core and periphery of any world system (cf. Stanley Diamond's review of Immanuel Wallerstein in *Dialectical Anthropology*) and (2) the differential rates of unionization in different economic sectors (cf. Shorter and Tilly's remarks, in *Strikes in France*, on unionization and deunionization, over time, in *la France dynamique* as compared to *la France statique*).

19. The *Centre Internationale de coordination de recherches sur l'autogestion* is located at the *Maison des sciences de l'homme*, 54 Boulevard Raspail, 75270 Paris Cedex 06. CICRA also plans to publish some selection of the conference papers.

ADORNO, MARXISM AND ART

by Russell Berman

Orthodox critics of Adorno draw bold-face lines between their own traditional Marxism and critical theory, which, it is alleged, derives from liberal bourgeois currents which had become an anachronism sometime before the appearance of the Communist Manifesto. It is repeatedly underscored that the work of Adorno and Horkheimer "has nothing in common with a real dialectical materialist analysis of bourgeois society."[1] Meanwhile there is certainly no love lost from the other side; one

1. Walter Jopke, "Grundlagen der Erkenntnis- und Gesellschaftstheorie Adornos und Horkheimers," in *Die "Frankfurter Schule" im Lichte des Marxismus*, ed. Johannes Heinrich von Heiseler *et al.* (Frankfurt, 1970), p. 49.

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need only recall Adorno's polemic against Lukács in order to demonstrate his desire to distance himself from the heritage of the Second and Third Internationals, no matter how ambivalent his intellectual relationship to the works of Marx may be. This apparently irresolvable antagonism between the two camps, however, may be preventing a thorough reexamination of critical theory—an examination aimed by no means at somehow hammering the round aphorisms of Frankfurt into Eastern European squares and thereby providing a ridiculous and fully undesirable apology, but, on the contrary, at investigating to what extent Adorno's problems are not too different from those of his orthodox sparring partners. The difficulty with his critical theory is not that it betrays Marxism but rather that it tries to save aspects of Marxism which any theory seriously concerned with social change might do well to jettison.

The problem is nowhere clearer than in the aesthetic debate. Left-wing critics of Adorno's aesthetics who claim that his alleged political resignation is simply reflected in his defense of the autonomous work of art have jumped to a too easy conclusion. Adorno's social theory, as presented in the *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* certainly does tendentially point to an impossibility of praxis. Here Adorno is transfixed by the burgeoning administered societies of fascism, Stalinism and the New Deal and it is precisely at this point that his socio-political assumptions must be defrosted and developed further than he did himself. In the decades after World War II, however, Adorno's concern with aesthetics cannot be fully reduced to a rejection of immediate political activity. On the contrary, it is into the realm of aesthetics that the emancipatory impulse inherent in Western civilization has fled. Thus, his aesthetic theory must be understood as a camouflaged social theory in self-imposed exile. The emancipatory moment in the tradition of Hegel and Marx migrates, in Adorno's thought, from the realm of immediately political praxis into art. Far from representing a conservative alternative to social engagement, as orthodox Marxist critics never tire to claim, his model for the advanced work of art is the highest stage in the development of the same heritage in which these same critics themselves are rooted. The inadequacies of Adorno's philosophical strategy can hardly be purged by a Marxist critique because it is precisely from Marx and Hegel that he inherits an intellectual posture which debilitates his critical theory and renders it incapable of radical critique in the present historical situation.

Although the *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* remains the fundamental text of Adorno's social theory, it is rooted deeply in the specific historical situation in which it arose. Adorno and Horkheimer are fighting a battle on two fronts. On the one hand, they attack the irrationalist ideologues of fascism, who reject conceptual, rational thought in the name of myth and thereby only integrate themselves all the more blindly into a bureaucratic apparatus. At the same time, however, the development of massively destructive societies, in which the traditional autonomous individual declines and the promise of individual happiness is broken, is not understood as an accidental atavistic regression but as a result of precisely those historical forces traditionally associated with progress. Fascism appears then as a specific culmination of the development of modern society and not an abberation due to some historical quirk, e.g., the late unification of Germany or the anachronism of aristocratic influence in an industrial state, as claimed by liberals and popular front Marxists.

This two-front situation explains the two central theses of the *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*.[2] First, in opposition to fascist irrationalists, Horkheimer and Adorno

2. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (Frankfurt, 1973), p. 5.

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try to demonstrate how myths were originally an attempt to explain nature in order to control it, i.e., they were an early form of rational enlightenment. Secondly, the regression of enlightenment into myth is examined. Enlightenment, which begins as the progressive rational penetration of nature ultimately fails due to its own internal development. This is the critique of traditional rationalism and is the aspect of the theory which remains relevant after 1945. Enlightenment develops as a rationalist stance toward the world, in answer to the needs or instinct of self-preservation. In order to overcome a hostile nature, the human subject differentiates itself from nature so as to be able to treat it as an object of domination. This grounding of the dialectic in an objectivist theory of nature, part of the heritage of nineteenth century materialism, anticipates how close we will find Adorno to traditional Marxism in the arguments below.

The sins at the base, in the relationship to nature, take their toll in the superstructure of cultural development: that is Adorno's starting point. The process of enlightenment is manifest in a series of increasingly abstract forms of praxis, from the mimetic reproduction of the given in primitive magic to mythic constructions and finally conceptual thought. Concepts replace the immediately experienced world; what is different is made equivalent by its being subsumed under abstract categories. Here the relation to Marx's theory of alienation is evident as well as Adorno's indebtedness to the Lukács of *History and Class Consciousness*. The material is eclipsed by the ideal, use-value disappears behind the appearance of exchange-value. Whatever is particular, unique or concrete is negated by generalizations, universals or abstract laws. Domination over nature, according to Horkheimer and Adorno, is achieved only at the cost of the denial of nature in the human subject.[3] Self-preservation, in the process of the enlightenment, ultimately abstracts from itself and places itself at the mercy of laws which in fact it itself has created. In order to escape from the terror of mythic destiny, natural laws are constructed which permit mastery over nature, while maintaining the subject's own unfreedom. Emancipation from the logic of domination would mean recognizing the subject itself as nature and thereby reconciling what is now repressed. This would be objectively possible, given the high level of development of the productive forces, if it were not for the mass deception perpetuated by the culture industry, which maintains the status quo.[4] Subjectivity is not able to seize the fruits of technological progress. Since this problem is not resolved, the forces of rationalization continue to turn back against humanity, engendering catastrophe; fascism is thus not an accident but a structural characteristic of modern society.[5]

Adorno's operating with an analysis which reaches from pre-Homeric Greece into the twentieth century may appear ahistorical. His concept of enlightenment offers little to a historicist. Nevertheless the argument is stretched so thin precisely because it is historical, i.e., it attempts to integrate individual phenomena into a unified development, originating in the past, determining the present and lurching ineluctably toward a future. This teleological reductionism is perhaps the most salient aspect of Adorno's Marxist heritage. Following Hegel, Marx offered an historical vision which attempted to encompass a total development from the standpoint of a postulated end. In line with Hegel's eurocentrism, Marx never succeeded in explaining

3. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
5. Theodor W. Adorno, *Noten zur Literatur IV* (Frankfurt), p. 154.

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qualitatively different, non-European experience.[6] More germane here, the telos of history, presented as the point toward which certain laws or tendencies objectively moved, turned back on the present and made rather questionable the possibility of praxis, understood as rationally chosen activity. No matter how, say, a Plekhanov might twist and turn about the rule of the individual in history, in the final analysis it was always the basic blueprint sketching the outlines of primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism and socialism that prevailed. If anything at all can be said for Lenin, it is that he broke with this determinism, but at that moment he also broke with Marxism. Gramsci's calling the October Revolution a revolution against Marx's *Capital* is as telling as is Max Eastman's evaluation of the Bolsheviks as "Nietzschen free-spirits."[7] The impossibility of praxis, the denegration of subjectivism in traditional Marxism is the progenitor of Adorno's historical pessimism. In the face of a new historical situation characterized by rationalization and bureaucratization, he of course introduced new categories, indebted partially to Freud, in order to overcome the bankruptcy of the objectivism of the orthodox Marxist dialectic. Yet he in fact carries on the same objectivist tradition in his historical structure. Treating the whole trajectory of Western civilization in terms of the growing domination of the concept, he continues what he himself calls the destructive work of the enlightenment by substituting general categories for the specific quality of past culture. Furthermore the specificity of art works, the category which superficially best characterizes Adorno's aesthetic concerns, ultimately only has meaning as a manifestation of the overall historical development; in his "Lyric Poetry and Society," poems of Goethe, Mörike and George are treated as "sundials of history."[8] In the light of that remark, the difference between Adorno and the ideologues of orthodox reflection theory begins to pale, despite all polemics. Finally the proverbial pessimism in critical theory is nothing else than the problematic status of praxis in the determinism of traditional Marxism. Adorno's finger waving at young activists is, at least partially, an echo of the efforts to crush proletarian spontaneity by the social democrats around Bebel. The exigencies of history outweigh the demands of the present. Heir to the historical teleology of Hegel and Marx, Adorno inherits its problems, and his melancholy proclamation of a historical dead end is only a twentieth century version of Wilhelm Dietzgen's sanguine, "Every day our cause becomes clearer and people get smarter."[9]

Yet despite this objectivist historical perspective, which Adorno shares with Marx, any proponent of dialectical materialism worth his salt would accuse critical theory of ignoring the materialist foundation of society and the objective forces slouching toward socialism. "Scientific socialism has proven that every theory which is not based on the 'objective tendency of history' ends in insipid subjectivism."[10] While Jokpe goes on to identify the working class as the carrier of this "objective tendency," it is nonetheless evident that traditional Marxist thought has not concerned itself with the historically real working class in its everyday experience, but rather with an ideal class,

6. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, translated by Martin Nicolaus (London, 1973), pp. 590ff.
7. Cf. Antonio Gramsci, "The Revolution Against *Capital*," in Pedro Cavalcanti and Paul Piccone, eds., *History, Philosophy and Culture in the Young Gramsci* (St. Louis, 1975), pp. 123-126. The phrase by Max Eastman is quoted in Daniel Aaron, *Writers on the Left* (New York, 1974), p. 61.
8. Theodor W. Adorno, "Lyric Poetry and Society," *Telos* 20 (Summer 1974), p. 65.
9. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York, 1969), p. 260.
10. Jokpe, p. 54.

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ascribed with a particular consciousness, in need of an ideological leadership and derived as a concept, ultimately, from the dialectic of the productive forces and the conditions of production.[11] Consequently it is hardly surprising to find often as not the exigencies of that leadership opposed to those of the contemporary proletariat. The point here however is that Adorno's aesthetic thought is informed by precisely the same productivism. Not only is the *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* rooted in an objective theory of nature; the aesthetic theory is concerned neither with the problems of individual creativity nor with reception and consumption, but only with the objective development of the social forces of aesthetic production. It is not the artist's individual subjectivity which is precipitated in the work. Adorno rejects the existentialist linking of the work of art to the artist's biography. Instead, the artist, at least in the moment of authentic production, must overcome his own false immediacy of sense certainty and, by rigorous technique, become the agent of an unconscious social force of production.[12] Thus, Adorno wrote in his 1960 essay, "Valery's Abweichungen," that the aesthetic force of production is one of erasing oneself and that "the aesthetic subject is not the producing individual in his accidentality but rather a latent social subject as whose representative the single artist acts." Whenever Adorno discusses the artistic process, his orientation is not toward the artist but the activity; not toward the producer but the production. The individual artist, only to the extent that he overcomes his accidental particularity, is the agent of a social force whose objective development appears in the artwork as the sundial of history. This is what Adorno means by the total constitution in his "Lyric Poetry and Society." This notion of an objective development of society marks both Adorno's Hegelian heritage as well as his implicit affinity with the left-communist tradition which, from Luxemburg to Grossmann to Mattick, emphasized the objective development of immanent laws of capital. Adorno's objectivist theory of the artwork as the expression of the total constitution is, in the final analysis, the theory of total capital in exile. To the extent that Adorno's work is characterized by immanent determinism, it is truly an heir to Marxism. The attack from the orthodox camp that Adorno is a subjective idealist is simply not to the point.

Adorno's productivism is not only apparent by default, i.e., in the absence of a reception theory (his antagonism to reception studies is due not only to their empirical character but also to their diverting attention away from the point of aesthetic production.)[13] Within the artwork itself the categories presented are obvious refinements of the traditional Marxist dialectic of production. While fleeing the realm of immediate political activity. Adorno's analyses remain Marxist in their most profound structural levels. The internal dialectic is characterized by the confrontation of spiritualization (*Vergeistigung*) and mimesis. The spirit, the aesthetic subject, works on and forms the material incorporated by mimesis. Both aspects are of course historically determined and thus the work of art is always a response to an historical instant. Thus the work not only corresponds to a particular historical situation (as the sundial of history); it is itself also the field within which the struggle between the productive forces of society (spiritualization) and the given social conditions (mimesis) unfolds. In Marxist fashion, Adorno's description of this dialectic is hardly neutral, for

11. On productivism in Marxism, see Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production* (St. Louis, 1975).

12. *Noten zur Literatur II*, p. 40.

13. Theodor W. Adorno, "Thesen zur Literatursoziologie," in *Ohne Leitbild* (Frankfurt, 1967), pp. 94-103.

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his true interest lies above all in the productive force, the spirit, and not in the inert material, nature, meaningless in itself and representing only an obstacle to the force of reason. "Determining the spirit in works of art is the highest duty of aesthetics."[14] writes Adorno and thus presents a twentieth century recapitulation of the orthodox position that only human labor produces (aesthetic) value.

Adorno's struggle to integrate works of art into an objectivist teleology with the corollary paralyzing effect on activity in the present as well as his concern with the forces of production to the neglect of both creativity and reception are results of aspects of Marxism he has maintained and not due to any apostasy. Orthodox Marxist attacks on these aspects tell less about Adorno than about the distance between the contemporary neo-Orthodoxy and the traditional Marxist tenets. Concern with allegedly immanent laws of history has been replaced by an ossified defense of bureaucracies incapable of controlling either history or art except by authoritarian means. Nevertheless Adorno's defense of the autonomous work of art, around which his aesthetics is constructed, is meaningful not only as the consequence of Marxist theorems but also within the specific historical context of its origin. Adorno of course presents his model within a scheme extending throughout the whole course of Western civilization: all history is the history of conceptual domination. Alternatively the question can be posed as to the specific historical changes articulated in his theory. The central issue is the transformation of the structure of society from the classical liberal model of the nineteenth century where the state maintained a limited profile on the edge of a society centered around a viable market economy. Bourgeois participation in society presupposed the existence of a private realm, beyond state control, which provided the rationale for accumulationist activity.[15] Toward the end of the nineteenth century, however, the market begins to lose its self-regulatory character necessitating the state's expansion and its increasing intervention into new areas of social activity, which are thereby integrated into the total system. At the same time, what appears at first to be mass participation in the state implies in fact conformist loyalty and a defusing of the opposition. Autonomy recedes before the onslaught of control. Critical theory interprets this as the culmination of an objective historical tendency, the reification of all relationships, and, in terms, of culture, the commodification of superstructural phenomena corresponding to the predominance of relations of commodity exchange at the base. Adorno falls back into a defensive position by locating a potentially autonomous realm in the monadic work of art. Art is what escapes the tyranny of enlightenment that has become myth: whatever keeps out of range of the great equalizer is banned into poesy.[16] It is escape from the process of rationalization and domination; it is the image of the unity of subject and object, outside of the realm of necessity.[17] The art work can offer the promise of autonomy in a world where everything must be good for something else.

Thus the shift from a society organized around free market exchange presupposing a private sphere contraposed to one based on control and domination evokes an aesthetic program designed to preserve a minimal autonomy by integrating extrinsic elements only by way of a rigorous formalism. According to Adorno, formal concerns were always operative in aesthetic production but only became self-conscious when the autonomy of art, its final secularization attained in the wake of bourgeois emancipation at the

14. Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetische Theorie* (Frankfurt, 1974), p. 513.
15. Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston, 1975), p. 82.
16. *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, p. 11.
17. *Noten zur Literatur IV*, p. 148.

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end of the eighteenth century, came under attack by the development of bourgeois society itself.[18] The claim of artistic autonomy represented a rejection of a society in which any autonomy was becoming increasingly precarious. The expansion of capitalist production and the integraton of growing spheres of existence into the world of reification meant that particularity was subsumed by the imperative of exchange and that what was qualitatively unequal was reduced to a quantitative equivalency. Art withdrew into itself and rejected a reified consciousness of the empirical world. Adorno opposes any art that claims to present norms for behavior—be it from the left or the right.[19] In the administered world of distorted political communication,[20] authentic art does not present a didactic message but rather represents a model of existence identical with itself, a model of successful enlightenment. Autonomy is the art work's struggle to exist for itself and not for the market, although Adorno has little doubt that the market will probably win in the end. His defense of the monadic work of art is thus a political defense. L'art pour l'art is understood as art against market society. It is a caustic response to the question of the marketing analyst: "but what is it good for?"[21]

Corresponding to this program for a virgin autonomy struggling to maintain its innocence in the Sodom of universal exchange, an outline is presented for the intellectual activity of the aesthetic philosopher. Rational, conceptual thought, unconscious of its own nature, has been identified as the trans-historical culprit; yet this critique itself develops from within enlightenment and not as a romantic yearning for a primitivist utopia. The aesthetic theory then would have to respond to reason's critique of reason and therefore remain suspended between conceptual and immanent aesthetics. The specific problem of aesthetic theory for Adorno is thus that it can be exclusively constructed neither from the concept above nor from the textual immanence below.[22]

The rejection of an aesthetics constructed from above is essentially Adorno's rejection of the systems of classical idealism. Both Kant and Hegel had centered their aesthetics around the external contemplation of the work of art. Kant's proclamation of disinterested pleasure in fact gave way to the category of taste, i.e., what appears to be disinterested and universal is in reality subjective and arbitrary. Hegel attempted to overcome this contemplative posture by replacing the aesthetic judgement based on taste with the work of art itself. Nevertheless his system maintained the structures of contemplation by reducing the work to a manifestation of the spirit. The work of art was fully identical with the spirit,[23] the identity of the general and the particular was posited as achieved. The presupposition was that philosophy was capable of grasping the absolute. This is the point at which Adorno's critique is aimed. He raicalizes the traditional left-Hegelian position that the absolute has not yet been achieved, by maintaining that the absolute cannot be known before reality and reason coincide.[24] Hegel had attempted to contemplate the art work from a teleological standpoint; in the administered world that sphere, too, has been occupied by ideology. Critical theory,

18. *Aesthetische Theorie*, p. 334.
19. Cf. the title essay in *Ohne Leitbild* and the critique of Lukács' didactics in "Erpresste Versöhnung," *Noten zur Literatur II*, pp. 152-187.
10. *Noten zur Literatur III*, p. 134.
21. *Aesthetische Theorie*, p. 182.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 510.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 512.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 523.

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anxious to ground its camouflaged social theory in the work of art, cannot approach the work with external norms, without ultimately becoming the instrument with which the work of art would be transformed into ideology and lose its quality as truth. Thus aesthetic thought cannot bring norms foreign to a work, but must rather develop the logic of the work itself. In this sense, Adorno writes that "one does not understand a work of art, if one translates it into concepts—were one to do only that, then it is certainly misunderstood—but rather when one is within its immanent movement; one might almost say, as soon as it, according to its own logic, is once again composed by the ear, painted by the eye, pronounced by language."[25]

The rejection of an abstract conceptual approach leads Adorno to turn toward the structure of the work of art itself. What is interesting, however, is not his turn to immanence but rather his critique of solely immanent approaches. Just as he argues that formalist self-consciousness is a necessary but by no means sufficient requirement for the authenticity of a work of art, an adequate aesthetic theory cannot stop at the stage of contemplative immediacy, of the sense certainty of the work. On the contrary, the task of aesthetic thought is precisely the examination of the intersubjective, social character of the formal elements.[26] Consequently, he appreciates the moment in immanent criticism that returned to the work from the extrinsic concerns of determinist positivism and the dizzy heights of *Geistesgeschichte*, while rejecting immanent criticism's reduction of the work to its factual presence. Similarly, Adorno rejects the immediacy of the recipient's naive understanding. The truth of a work of art is only decipherable when the formal structures are understood as social mediations; the recipient must overcome his individual enthusiastic identification with, for example, the figures of a novel, in order to understand the work as art. Reception that ignores the art work's transcendence of its monadic character is called pre-aesthetic because it misses the essential character of art. Because it rushes head-on toward the work, it misses it. "Enthusiasm for art," writes Adorno, "is alien to art."[27]

The structure of this aesthetic theory is, however, not only a consequence of the inadequacies of idealist systems and immanent naiveté. Adorno explains that major characteristics of modern art itself evoke a certain theoretical structure. Modern art is generally suspicious of a normative aesthetics, which would claim the legitimacy of a transcendent authority able to contemplate the work. This suspicion is manifest in the art's own anti-contemplative spirit, be it Kafka's shocks or Brecht's estrangement techniques.[28] On the other hand, modern art needs philosophical explication in order to impede its own collapse into ideology. The demands of modern art converge with the crises of traditional aesthetic approaches and give shape to Adorno's aesthetic theory. Since no total system can be postulated, the approach is necessarily fragmented; it is stretched between thought and experience,[29] between concepts and formal analysis. The inarticulate logic of the work is articulated, but it is not frozen into an eternal norm. Theory does not swoop down on its object from on high but rather exists in a dialectic with it. The dialectic, however, is not one where the synthesis is assured in advance.

This oscillation between immanent and conceptual criticism, apparently a wavering between Kant and Hegel, is more important as an unconscious rapprochement with

25. *Noten zur Literatur III*, p. 138.
26. *Aesthetische Theorie*, p. 513.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 514-515.
28. Cf. Rainer Friedrich, "On Brecht and Eisenstein," *Telos* 31 (Spring 1977), pp. 154-164.
29. *Aesthetische Theorie*, p. 525.

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Husserlian phenomenology, for cognition of the work of art is now treated as a dialectic between the conceptual and the pre-conceptual realms of experience. Nevertheless, this goes too far; in the *Aesthetic Theory*, the treatment of phenomenological criticism is cursory and negative. Furthermore, on closer examination, the antinomies of Adorno's aesthetics appear to be aporia in which he is trapped and not moments in a process of the promised reconciliation. This marks the distance from Husserl, for despite all of Adorno's disclaimers as to the illegitimacy of a totalizing philosophy, his aesthetic theory still invokes the confrontation of a traditional theoretic posture and artistic experience.[30] Ultimately, the objectivism remains unreconstructed. This implies, however, an Achilles heel in the defense of the monadic art work. Adorno defends autonomy ultimately as the opposition to the objective expansion of commodity relations. As such, however, the art work loses any validity in itself and even its negativity is integrated into affirmative structures. This is not simply the defeat of a work, its loss of aesthetic legitimacy (*Entkunstung*) but in fact a consequence of his own theoretical stance. Subjectivity is never autonomous but only a moment thoroughly defined by the historical objectivity it purported to oppose. His defense of the particular, i.e., the point which the neo-Orthodoxy identifies as the cardinal sin of subjectivism, is in fact an ossification of the particular within the general; Adorno's objectivism is simply a more successful attempt at totalization than that of his somewhat underdeveloped traditional critics.

The defense of the monadic work of art, furthermore, was based on a particular historical model. Increasing autonomy corresponded to a rising curve of commodification over four or five millenia of market exchange. Modern formalism thus was a continuation and refinement of the traditional response to conceptual terror. This historical scheme, an attempt to retain the universal history of Hegel and Marx, evidently precludes the possibility of perceiving the qualitatively new, for the new is only more of the old. Neither the orthodox procrustean efforts to grasp all art in terms of reflection theory nor Adorno's similarly universal explanation of formal resistance to the domination of the enlightenment is able to postulate fundamentally new or different aesthetic functions.

Adorno's entrapment in traditional theory is also, as implied above, evident in the dialectic within the artwork between spiritualization and mimesis. While criticizing Hegel's apotheosis of reason and, specifically, his total reduction of the work to the spirit, Adorno's apparent concessions to the material are deceptive. He remains oriented toward a domination of nature in the fashion of the enlightenment. The work of art is, he argues, not simply the residue of what has escaped enlightenment; it is enlightenment itself. While the mystified reality of universal mediation, in which essence and appearance fall apart, degenerates into mythic catastrophe, the work of art as self-identity is the image of disenchantment, of enlightenment.[31] Adorno certainly argues that the authentic work must incorporate a recognition of the contemporary impossibility of the reconciliation it seems to promise. He certainly also argues for the work to remain loyal to the heritage of suffering. Nevertheless, the confrontation between the aesthetic forming and the aesthetic material is weighted in favor of the former; the material is ultimately only lifeless nature, fair game for the schemes of artistic technique. Adorno's brilliant defense of autonomy is a Trojan horse with domination of nature hidden in its belly.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 524.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 337.

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While Adorno's model of the monadic work of art is presented as a response to enlightenment projected throughout Western history, we have already indicated how in fact it developed in a very specific context, i.e., during the expansion of the state in the post-liberal era subsequent to the collaspse of the self-regulating market. Various bureaucratic forms burgeoned in order to regulate increasing sectors of social activity. It would be a mistake, however, for critical thought to remain transfixed by the historical phenomena which nurtured the classical age of critical theory: fascism, Stalinism and the New Deal. Struggling to maintain autonomous control of the work process, the workers' councils, as Adler and Rutigliano argue,[32] fit neatly into the strategy of capitalist rationalization. Similarly, the question must be raised if Adorno's objectivist apperception of aesthetic autonomy has not ceased to be critical in a changed historical context. The bureaucratic strategy of the eradication of particularity evokes its own obsolescence. In order to remain viable, the system of domination demands negativity, which it must incorporate and overcome so as to prevent ossification. The aesthetics of critical theory thus succumb to the ruse of reason in the guise of repressive desublimation. Far from threatening totalization, the rigid defense of autonomy offered by Adorno in fact reinforces it. Pinning down autonomy on a mounting board of objectivism (and not due to the extreme subjectivism impugned by orthodox critics), he transforms negativity into affirmation. Absolute negation becomes conformism.

Adorno's aesthetics finds its limits in terms of both the objectivist teleology, a further development of the chiliastic Judaeo-Christian tradition secularized in Hegel and Marx, and the underlying productivism. These are the points that cripple its critical force and where the aesthetic problematic must be re-evaluated. In this sense, the weight of history could be lifted from the shoulders of the artwork in order to let it breathe in the present. The truth is not the whole, Adorno knew, yet for him the artwork's truth was wholly negative. Nothing could bind art more fundamentally to the forces of domination. Furthermore, the critique of the ideological aspects of a work—presupposing, of course, access to an objective truth from the standpoint of which judgment is passed on false consciousness—undercuts the very medium of communication. Huddled in its monadicity, Adorno's artwork becomes an embellishment of corporate liberalism because it refuses to risk contamination. Yet precisely that wager is the prerequisite of emancipation.

The contours of art and aesthetics in the age of the legitimation crisis, during which the social structures decay for lack of internal creativity, leave the region staked out by critical theory. In place of Adorno's program seeking to salvage autonomy threatened by objective dictates, an autonomy rooted in a sociability inimical to atomistic isolation could underpin aesthetic activity. That, however, would demand a break with traditional teleology and productivism and necessitate a thorough vindication of subjectivism. By surrendering the metaphysical objectivism of an all too abstract totality, one must by no means fall into the shallow immanence of new criticism nor become callous to the heritage of suffering. Yet by pretending to find grace in monastic isolation, one founds the artwork on an anachronistic structure and unwittingly, despite all good intentions, rushes head-long into an unholy alliance.

32. Franklin Adler, "Factory Councils, Gramsci and the Industrialists," *Telos* 31 (Spring 1977), pp. 67-90 and Enzo Rutigliano, "The Ideology of Labor and Capitalist Rationality in Gramsci," in *Telos* 31 (Spring 1977), pp. 91-100.

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IRONY AND THE "DISORDERS OF THE SOUL"

by David Gross

1.

In 1908 the Russian poet Alexander Blok made a statement which could be taken as an epigraph for our age. "All the most lively and sensitive children of our century," he wrote, "are stricken by a disease unknown to our doctors and psychiatrists. It is related to the disorders of the soul and might be called 'irony'." [1]

How true this insight has become by the 1970s probably even Blok could not have imagined. Though no one has put it quite this way, it seems that the central problem of this decade may be the prevalence of the "ironic mood," a mood which has penetrated and subverted nearly everything, including some of the ideals of the 1960s. In fact one could convincingly argue that the New Left collapsed, not because it fell from tragedy into farce, but because it slid from tragedy into irony. It appears now that it might have been better if it had only descended into farce since out of farce new efforts to "try again" can easily be made. But this is not the case with the ironic frame-of-mind which is much more paralyzing and harder to overcome than it would seem at first glance. To make clear why this is so (and before exploring what might be done about it) a few words should first be said about the meaning of the ironic style.

2.

In defining irony it is best to dispense immediately with its merely literary or dramatic meaning, that is, with irony as a mode of discourse or a method of evoking certain theatrical effects, though until the last century this was almost the only way it was dealt with in the English-speaking world.[2] As used here the term will mean instead a mode of living and a way of being and perceiving oneself in the world. The first person to discuss irony in this sense (and thereby give it a contemporary significance) was the German critic Friedrich Schlegel. Along with several other writers around 1800—among them Adam Müller, Ludwig Teick, and Karl Solger—Schlegel attempted to broaden and re-define the concept by asking not only about its literary implications but about its implications for life. What he wrote left a lasting imprint both on the romantic movement and on the modern conception of irony.

For Schlegel, the world as we experience it is so infinitely complex, and so apparently ambivalent at its very core, that it cannot be grasped by any one method nor by a combination of methods. For this reason the only adequate relationship to the bewildering "play of contraries" is an ironic one in which the ambiguous nature of reality is accepted not only as given but as unalterable. Irony, then, became in Schlegel's world-view the most appropriate "form" for the paradoxical "content" of the world as it actually is ("Ironie is die Form des Paradoxen").[3] As he put it more concisely, "Irony is the clear consciousness of an infinitely full chaos."[4] To Schlegel, this meant that irony can never really comprehend the world *in toto* but only grasp

1. Alexander Blok, cited in Abram Tertz, *On Socialist Realism* (New York, 1960), p. 74.
2. See Norman Knox, *The Word IRONY and Its Context 1500-1755* (Durham, 1961).
3. Friedrich Schlegel, "Critical Fragments," no. 48, in *Friedrich Schlegel's Lucinde and the Fragments*, trans. Peter Firchow (Minneapolis, 1971), p. 149. I have slightly modified Firchow's unsatisfactory translation.
4. Friedrich Schlegel, cited in René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism: 1750-1950* (New Haven, 1965), p. 15.

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that it is ultimately incomprehensible. It also meant that by means of such a "clear consciousness" the chaos of life could, in a sense, be transcended, though *only in thought* and by means of resignation before the "fathomless complexities"—something Nietzsche would later call *amor fati*.

From these beginnings a whole concept of Romantic irony was developed in Germany during the first decade of the nineteenth century. When fully elaborated it became a complete *Weltanschauung*, an entire way of looking at life in general.[5] For the purposes here, four essential characteristics of this ironic frame-of-mind need to be briefly mentioned.

First, the ironic attitude proclaimed an absolute separation between the self and the world, subjectivity and objectivity, *Innerlichkeit* and *Aktualität*. The cleft was taken to be so deep that no one could feel truly at home in the world; regardless of what an individual did, it was assumed that he would experience only a profound estrangement in the midst of existence, and this not because of warped social relations but because of the very nature of reality itself.

Second, the ironic style accepted that living with contrasts and paradoxes was something to be taken for granted since these were part and parcel of the experience of life. Not only were dichotomies said to exist everywhere and in everything but it was good that they did since out of these antitheses (which the German ironists wanted to preserve rather than abolish) spring the rich sources of creativity.

Third, irony assumed that since the whole of existence was paradoxical it was naturally open to multiple interpretations none of which could be entirely correct. This meant that the most adequate view of the world would be the one which was most malleable, the one that tried to see all aspects of an issue while remaining subjectively committed to none. Imaginative breadth combined with disinterested understanding became the ideal, not one-sided partisanship tied to a single perspective.[6]

Lastly, irony eschewed direct involvement in reality since one could not get a firm grip on it anyway. The world, it seemed, did not lend itself to engagement but rather to a spirit of disengagement, urbanity, playfulness, and dispassionate contemplation. Being conscious of life's complexities and yet mentally surpassing them through an awareness of the "play of contraries" was taken to be the essence of freedom. Hence, not practice but interiority and reflection were the twin paths that led to the free individual. No one expressed this view better than the pre-Marxist Lukács who wrote in 1915: "irony [the *via dolorosa* of interiority]. . . is the highest freedom that one can attain in a world without God."[7]

3.

This, in general terms, is the concept of irony as it was elaborated by Schlegel and

5. Kierkegaard was one of the first to comment on this in his dissertation of 1840. Modern irony, he correctly observed, "directs itself not against this or that existence but against the whole given actuality. . . It is not this or that phenomenon but the totality of existence which it considers *sub specie ironiae*." Soren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony*, trans. Lee M. Capel (New York, 1965), p. 271.

6. When, later on, Adorno in his *Negative Dialectics* spoke of the "serene demonstration that there are two sides to everything" (why not twenty or thirty?), he was speaking in the ironic mode. The opposite of this is the suprisingly un-ironic statement of Karl Kraus in his journal *Die Fackel*: "I have often been begged. . . to view a situation from all sides. But I came to the same conclusions about it. So I persist in viewing a situation from only one side whereby I save myself much labor."

7. Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), p. 93.

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others around 1800. Almost as soon as it emerged an anti-ironic mode of thought arose to challenge it but never successfully established itself on firm foundations. Not surprisingly, one of the earliest and best statements of this counter-trend can be found in Hegel's *Aesthetik* (written in the 1820s, published in 1835). With pointed and polemical language Hegel argued that because irony sees the world as fundamentally ambiguous, it tends to condone an attitude of "irresolution" and "loss of seriousness" which inevitably leads to escapism and irresponsibility. Furthermore, Hegel contended, the ironic stance is shamelessly elitist. Since the ironist believes the world is too complicated to change, he feels justified in withdrawing into a "god-like geniality." From this perspective above the fray, the privileged "artistic" few, the cognoscenti, are inclined to "look down upon the ordinary man as limited and dull."[8] The result, according to Hegel, is both a contempt for the masses and an inability to become involved in meaningful causes. Hence, ironic detachment seemed to Hegel to be the cause of a peculiarly modern form of sickness: one which predisposed the individual to "abstract inwardness" and eroded his power to become filled with a personal "content that is solid and substantial."[9] With the loss of what he termed "character" came the loss of something even more important: the vision of what is "highest and best" in life. If an age were entirely given over to irony it would be unable to take seriously the central issues of "justice, morality, and truth" because it would know how to maintain only a sardonic relationship to them.[10]

In his *Aesthetik* Hegel sketched a major critique of the ironic style, and since that time no one has sufficiently developed or improved upon his ideas. Even Kierkegaard in his *Concept of Irony* only elaborated on Hegel without moving beyond him.[11] By the end of the nineteenth century a few other writers—for example, Chantovoine and Palante in France—took a critical stance toward irony but their legacy was weak and carried little weight. In the twentieth century even less attention has been given to re-assessing the ironic attitude, which makes Blok's comment all the more *à propos*. We do seem to be living in an age that has embraced rather than opposed the ironic mode of being in the world.

4.

This can be borne out by noting the enormous ideological effect irony has had in almost every area of life in the West. Intellectually it has become the primary method for dealing with reality—a method so prevalent that we are hardly aware of how deeply it has been etched into the fabric of our experience. Not only do the schools and universities encourage and reward the ironic attitude,[12] but the entire literary and

8. G.W.F. Hegel, *Aesthetik*, I (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1955), p. 74.

9. G.W.F. Hegel, *ibid.*, p. 74.

10. G.W.F. Hegel, *ibid.*, p. 75.

11. Though in many respects Kierkegaard had a more favorable view of irony than did Hegel, he still agreed that the ironic attitude represented "infinite, absolute negativity." He also thought it offered a spurious, merely negative, freedom *vis-à-vis* the world of concrete actuality. And again like Hegel, he believed that unless the ironic stance were tempered by morality, it would automatically lead to irresponsibility, irresolution and a merely contemplative outlook on life. See Soren Kierkegaard, *op.cit.*, pp. 236-242, 264-279.

12. It goes without saying that, except for the state, the university is the most ironic institution in modern society. One of its basic goals is to encourage an "objective attitude" toward life (which means seeing things now one way, now another). More than this, it communicates the notion that since all values are relative, it is both constrictive and foolish to be committed to any one set of beliefs. Consequently, the life-style appropriate to a liberal university culture (and the millions who pass through the institution pick this up) is one that is witty, sophisticated, and

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artistic establishment is built on the assumption that irony is the only legitimate way to relate to the world or to express one's apprehension of it. The triumph of irony is to be found in nearly all aspects of twentieth century culture: in the novel which Lukács called the ironic medium *par excellence*; in Symbolist and Surrealist poetry as well as in virtually all post-1945 poetic movements; in abstract art, pop art, and now conceptual art; in Joyce and the modernist tradition of literature; in Camus and the philosophy of the absurd; and, to go no further, in the entire avant garde theater from Artaud and Beckett to Pinter and Ionesco. Even the New Left has not been immune to the ironic attitude, and this in spite of the fact that Marxism—whose premises it was in part based upon—was perhaps the only anti-ironic movement to emerge in the West during the last century and a half. It goes without saying that Marx denied all the presuppositions of modern irony just described. Liberalism on the other hand (at least in its late phase) is the embodiment of ironic politics since it believes in and attempts to establish the hegemony of all the major assumptions of the ironic mode.

Under present circumstances it is easy to slip into an ironic style because it provides a way of facing reality without being defeated by it. Irony recommends acquiescence to a world that is not only obdurate but essentially unchangeable. It explains, or explains away, incongruities which are said to be part of the structure of existence. It teaches the relativity of all values: the fact that, in an infinite universe, there is nothing but a continual succession of shifting perspectives, none of which is adequate for understanding. No wonder then that for the ironic individual no real meaning or purpose adheres to anything; there is nothing that appears to be self-evidently good or bad; there is no cause worth living or dying for. On the contrary, everything is seen as vague, insubstantial, and transitory. Even the most essential ideas are taken to be elusive and enigmatic not just on their surface but at their very core.

5.

This raises an important question: Assuming that the ironic style is a basically unsatisfactory one, is there any way to get beyond it today? This is a particularly pertinent question for a good part of the American Left which has fallen, in more ways than it may suspect, into an ironic frame-of-mind.

One obvious answer—and it has been all to familiar since the late 1960s—would be to return to what Friedrich Schiller called the "naive attitude."[13] To be naive,

urbane; one that rejects all ideologies except its own as "illusions;" one that is self-consciously neutral in everything since "truth" is acquired not through engagement, but by remaining resolutely *au dessus de la mêleé*. (Neitzsche saw something like this a hundred years ago when he wrote that irony was the principal attribute of scholars who, under the guise of "the inquiring mind," had spread it into all the areas of thought as "a clever bulwark erected against the truth.")

13. Friedrich Schiller, in his *Ueber naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (1795), contrasted what he called the "naive" attitude of the ancients with the "sentimental" attitude of the moderns. For our purposes, these aspects of the naive disposition stand out: first, that it represents a spontaneous, natural relationship toward life (in contrast to the self-conscious and reflective mood of "sentimentality"); second, that it is not only rooted in, but lives out of and thinks from, sensuous human experience (while the sentimental individual, on the other hand, lives mainly in "ideas"); and lastly, that it is interested in *concretely interacting* with the object world (whereas the sentimental attitude is more interested in "the impressions objects make on one's mind" than in interacting with the objects themselves). On the whole, the naive attitude as Schiller described it is "healthy" but limited, childlike, and uncomplicated, while modern sentimentality is "discordant," but more complex, mature, and open to infinite possibilities. See Schiller, "Ueber naive und sentimentalische Dichtung," *Philosophische Schriften*, in *Schillers Werke*, vol. XX, Benno von Weise and Helmut Koopmann, eds. (Weimar, 1962), pp. 413-503.

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especially politically, would mean seeing reality as simple and clear-cut once again. It would imply viewing the social world in an unambiguous and probably dualistic way with, for example, the ruling class and exploiters on one side, and the ruled and exploited on the other with no distinctions in between. Likewise it would mean conceiving of the world as eminently changeable and subject to human will, not as something given over to the play of accident or chance. Historically speaking, the naive attitude has engendered tremendous passion and commitment to the same degree that the ironic attitude has produced skepticism and passivity. Most mass movements of both the Left and Right have been naive in the sense described here. In fact it could be argued that activism is possible only where there is the real (though "naive") conviction that the world is completely mutable and therefore capable of being shaped by human action. Furthermore, the naive awareness does not allow itself to be paralyzed by obstacles, but rather engenders in its adherents a feeling of dedication and vision, of vigor and enthusiasm, just as early Christianity did (and the Church of the first three centuries was a model "naive movement"). Such movements acquire faith in themselves, and consequently great power, precisely because they see reality in unequivocal terms. Lastly, the naive outlook generates an inordinate capacity for heroism and heroic commitment which cannot be aroused by the ironic mode; the latter is simply far too subjective and self-occupied and cannot break through to a long-term involvement with the objective world.

If the Left could re-appropriate the naive outlook—so the argument goes—it would have overcome irony and could then become straightfowardly radical, and presumably effective, again. But this the Left cannot do, nor should it even try.

Once an individual or a movement has been gripped by irony he or it cannot simply will to become naive again, just as for Schiller when one has become "sentimental" he loses forever the ability to return to the simplicity of the ancients. The very label "naive" can only appear in an ironic age, whereas the naive attitude as such (which is wholly incapable of constituting itself as "naive") simply *lives* its naiveté. Hence when the conception "living naively" appears, it is already to late to recoup it. By the time this state is reached it can be comprehended intellectually, but it can no longer be experienced unreflectively as it once was.

It is true, one can affect being naive again and pretend to return to a world which is simple and transparent, but at the deepest level this choice represents self-deception and bad faith. Going backward is really unthinkable since there can be no such thing as an "active forgetting" of the kind Nietzsche talked about in his early work.[14] Much more urgent and realistic is the need to look ahead instead of behind. "The way back to Arcadia is closed forever," Schiller correctly observed; and his near contemporary Heinrich von Kleist put it still more expressively: "We have eaten from the tree of knowledge. Now paradise is bolted shut, and the angel stands behind us. We must journey around the world to see whether perhaps it is opened again somewhere on the other side."[15] For this age, the naive attitude is gone for good and there is nothing left to do but travel in a forward direction.

6.

What "traveling forward" means is obviously open to interpretation. I suggest that it means at least two things, one of which lies as a task immediately before us while the

14. On Nietzsche's concept of "creative forgetfulness," see Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatvi Charkrovrty Spivak (Baltimore, 1976), p. xxix.

15. H. von Kleist, "Ueber das Marionettentheater," *Sämtliche Werke* (Munich, 1965), p. 828.

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other presents itself as a more distant and elusive goal.

First, in terms of intellectual work, going forward implies the need to account for the hegemony that the ironic style has achieved since 1800. What is required at present is a careful historical study not only of the origin of the ironic attitude, but of the process by which it entrenched itself so securely. Such a study would have to include: (1) an investigation of the *"contemporary non-contemporaneity"* of irony, that is, an explanation of how a mode of thought that emerged in a pre-industrial setting managed not merely to linger on but to become dominant by the late twentieth century. It should not be forgotten that the modern concept of irony was developed by Central European "romantic" intellectuals who lived in semi-feudal circumstances, worked within an essentially religious framework, were not politically engaged, and had no notion of the complexities of modern life. Given these facts, how did it happen that the ironic attitude became so widespread at the very time that the conditions that produced it began to disappear? In answering this question another kind of investigation would be necessary: (2) *a thorough-going Ideologiekritik* which would explore the super-structural and substructural functions of contemporary irony against the background of modern capitalism. Here it would be important to show exactly what needs the ironic mode serves, both in modern liberal culture (film, literature, the university) and in the mass culture of everyday life (TV serials, commericals, pulp fiction, weekly news magazines, etc.). The purpose of such study would be to truly comprehend irony in all its ramifications rather than try to escape it. This approach would call for something that still needs further development, namely a rigorous and methodologically sophisticated cultural criticism of the kind begun by Lefebvre, Eco, Hoggart, and others in this country.

Second, moving in a forward direction means not denying irony, as the naive attitude does, but subsuming it in praxis. Exactly what this would entail is impossible to say at this point; after all, the power and pervasiveness of the ironic style has not yet really been grasped so it is nowhere near ready to be overcome. Nevertheless, a self-conscious practice which finds its way outside the parameters of the ironic mood is still possible. It can happen when and wherever an individual actively intervenes in the world, begins testing reality concretely, and inserts himself into life in the form of what Sartre called a "radical project." Something like this is what would be required in order to transcend irony, but action would have to be based not on an arbitrary choice but on an understanding of what is immanent in the historical process itself.

Unfortunately we are today so conditioned by, or inundated with, irony that it is possible only to suggest a path out of the present dilemma without any certain vision as to what that path would look like. There is clearly still a need for more organizational activity but also for more superstructural work—for what Adorno called the "labor of concepts" in the face not simply of a *verkehrte Welt*, as Marx put it, but of an increasingly *verwaltete* (a world of total administration) as well.[16] These do not exhaust the options that may lead one beyond irony but there is no point in detailing others here. In any case the issue is not answerable on paper because practice is not a "scholastic question" that can be resolved by discussing it but only by doing it.

In the meantime—even if it represents a step backward from changing the world to interpreting it—it seems imperative that the process of grasping and comprehending the ironic mode be a first priority, if only to prepare the way for another kind of practice in the future.

16. See "Introduction to Adorno," *Telos* 19 (Spring 1974), pp. 3-4.

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LAW, ETHICS AND INTEREST*

by Mihaly Vajda

The Hungarian councils republic was not the outcome of a bloody, cruel or inhuman struggle. Its victory was without gunshots, and, at least in Lukács' view, free of conflict among the various proletarian groups. More exactly, it has been said at some considerable expense to the truth, that it signified that the Hungarian proletariat in its totality "became conscious" "of its own possibilities, creating by the clarity of its own self-consciousness its unity, its power and its structure. The so-called 'leaders' were merely the executors of this will, the source and goal alike of which is unity."[1] Two articles, significant within Lukács' theoretical work, owe their origin to this self-deception: "Old Culture and New Culture," and "The Changing Function of Historical Materialism."[2] These articles are the texts of two lectures that Lukács characterized as theoretical in nature. But throughout the dictatorship, when Lukács was confronted with concrete problems as a politician or a politician of culture, this false interpretation proved untenable for the solution of concrete tasks. For exactly this reason, it is clear that writings of the latter type are grounded in error. In fact, the coming about of the councils republic and the proclamation of the dictatorship of the proletariat constituted a mere shift in political power and not a radical transformation of human relations. Such shifts do not fundamentally change the world of interests in which we still live.

The world of interests is also the realm of law: the essay "The Role of Morality in Communist Production" analyzes precisely the circumstances under which ethics is substituted for law. We must recognize that here Lukács dissolves law into ethics, the assumption on the part of ethics of the function of law (naturally, the equivalence of functions holds up to the moment when both can regulate the same process) in the most immediate future, i.e., he is not speaking of the already realized present. Lukács was in fact confronting a situation in which the workers did not want to produce without the application of juridical coercive sanctions, although it was in their interest (identified with moral duty) to sacrifice themselves on the "labor front."

The dissolution of law into ethics means nothing other than the realization of the Kantian-Fichtean moral world.[3] But Lukács harmonizes Kant's and Fichte's ideas

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1. Georg Lukács, "Party and Class," in *Political Writings 1919-1929*, ed. Rodney Livingstone (London, 1972), pp. 34-35.

2. The first article is almost identical to the one published under "Kommunismus" in 1920. The second is identical in terms of its point of departure to the one included in *History and Class Consciousness* that has the same title. But the modifications made on the original texts changed the intentions of the essay substantially, even though Lukács did not notice it in 1922.

3. On the relationship between Kantian-Fichtean ethics, Lukács expressed himself in his 1918 contribution on *conservative and progressive* idealism. Cf. G. Lukács, *A Konzervativ es progressiv Idealismus vitaja*, in *Utam Marxhoz*, I (Budapest, 1971), pp. 177-186; also in the article written around 1918, *Il bolscevismo come problema morale*. Cf. *A bolsevizmus mint erkölcsi problema* in *Történelem es osztalytudat* (Budapest, 1971), pp. 11-17. It is only after 1920 that a Hegelian type of philosophy of history definitively surpasses this form of ethics. It is worth

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with the Marxian spirit through which law is linked to bourgeois society and actually regulates its behavioral modes. What they is law?

In Kant, law is differentiated from ethics, not so much for its content as for its form. "Valid" law—which can be easily identified with the natural law of the Enlightenment, since it has nothing in common with the juridical, empirico-incidental, rationally non-justifiable reality of a concrete historical epoch—is eternal to the same extent as moral law; the latter, in turn, cannot regulate the realm of nature. In Fichte, where non-nature must become nature or, in equivalent terms, nature must become non-nature, there already looms the possibility of suppressing purely juridical and alienated external regulation. For Marx, too, law is the alienated form of regulating interhuman relations. And when Marx speaks of "juridical mystification" as a falsifying appearance, he does not mean to claim that these relations would remain the same with or without juridical regulation, as if mystifications were only a veil over men's eyes.

The form of juridical regulation is alienated and *it cannot be otherwise in bourgeois society*. Bourgeois society is in effect the society of interest, and "interest, insofar as it is the motive of individual action, cannot be other than the *expression* of the reduction of needs to greed."[4] When needs are reduced to greed, one must always possess more, appropriate everything (i.e., expropriate one's self) and struggle against all whom he does not yet possess. The society in which this occurs is one of complete isolation, the solipsistic society where I alone exist and anything else exists only if I possess it—the *solus ipse* seeking to possess in a battling world where the will of the other can be valid for no one. Nonetheless, there must still be some degree of regulation to guarantee the validity of my ownership. Insofar as he aspires to my property, an other cannot recognize it as mine; yet my ownership must be recognized. Thus, the process of recognition, legitimation and regulation extends beyond single individuals by limiting each individual with respect to another and at the same time effecting recognition. This is the essence of bourgeois juridical relations. And this type of regulating process is also acceptable to those *lacking possessions*, those who are only limited and not recognized by juridical relations: for them, the recognition of the regulating process represents the abstract possibility of their becoming recognized.

Lukács affirms that if a society "is divided into several classes or,—to put it another way—if the interests of the human groups who make up society are not the same, it is inevitable that the regulation of human behavior will conflict with the interests of the indubitably decisive group, if not, indeed, with the majority of human beings. But human beings cannot be induced to act voluntarily against their own interests, they can only be compelled to do so—whether this compulsion be of a physical or of a spiritual kind. As long as there are different classes, therefore, it is inevitable that the function of regulating social behavior will be fulfilled by law, and not by morality. But the function of law does not end with the imposition of a mode of behavior on the oppressed classes in the interests of their oppressors. The class interests of the ruling classes must be enforced even *vis-à-vis* the ruling class itself. This [is the] second origin of the necessity of law."[5]

In my opinion, the relation between the two moments mentioned by Lukács is

noting that in the 1920 variant of the *Kultur* article, the names Kant and Fichte are replaced by Kant and Hegel. This is the only alternation made to the 1919text.

4. Agnes Heller's definition in her *Marx's Theory of Need* (London, 1977).

5. "The Role of Morality in Communist Production," in *Political Writings, op.cit.*, pp. 48, 49.

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contradictory, or better still, there are not really *two moments* at all. If interest is the reduction of needs to greed, then the bearers of interest are only those who have already subordinated themselves to bourgeois social relations, or those who have already accepted its principle of regulation, i.e., bourgeois law. If someone has accepted it, he is *forced* to act against his own interests insofar as bourgeois law constrains everyone to act so, if only in its setting restrictions upon greed. Thus, valorizing the interest of the dominant class against itself is not "the second source" of law but its *only* source. This involves the interest of the *dominant* class only because the bourgeois capitalist class is the conscious representative of the reduction of needs to greed. More exactly, it is this group that, having shaped itself in the 19th century capitalist orbit after partially satisfying its own greed, has assumed property—the process of excluding the other—as a "natural given" and as its point of departure. For the 19th-century English proletariat (which constituted the basis for Marx's considerations on the proletariat), law is not limitation but, rather, exclusion. This class is potentially "in its exclusion, a *revolt* against it,"[6] for it has *no interest* and, thus, no need reduced to greed; on the contrary, all it has is needs, however minimal.

When the relations of bourgeois society reduce everyone's needs to greed and enable the fulfillment of ownership needs (what counts here is quantity, not quality, or rather the fact of the possibility of owning), law functions with a regulating effect against all: it forces each man to act against his own interest by prohibiting both the plundering of others and the exclusion of all others from society. On the other hand, law expresses the interests of certain individuals by compelling others to act against their own interests in respecting these individuals' property. And since interest is need reduced to greed—and the latter can only be attributed to individuals—the issue is always individual interest; group or class interests are constituted by more or less identical individual interests with respect to some other group or class. To use Heller's phrase, group interest or the "public interest" of a group is the outcome of a twofold estrangement: the estrangement of need to greed or interest, and the estrangement of interest to public interest.

Bourgeois society becomes thereby truly efficient: its laws of movement and the advent of its "*tantae molis erat*" are fully realized when it is "in the interest" of each individual to "act against his own interests," in other words, when one has learned that his own personal interest can be made valuable only "with respect to" public interest—when he has consequently accepted law as the fundamental regulating agent. From the historical standpoint of the totality of bourgeois society, it is irrelevant through what mediations the public interest is constituted (class interest, national interest, etc.), although knowledge of the whole is necessary in order to understand it.

For us, the only important fact is that "the choice of a specific interest, of any type whatsoever, remains always *internal to* the (capitalist) society that produces commodities" (Heller). In the last analysis, then, there is no difference between the interests of the dominant classes and those of the oppressed. The proletariat's class interest is a component of bourgeois society to the same degree as is the interest of the bourgeoisie.

"Moreover, the very conditions of existence of capitalist society—the anarchy of production, constant revolutionizing of productive methods, production based on motives of profit and so on—make it impossible from the outset to unite individual

6. K. Marx and F. Engels, *La Sacra Famiglia* (Rome, 1971), p. 37.

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and class interests harmoniously within one class," says Lukács,[7] speaking of the bourgeoisie. "The class position of the proletariat, either in capitalist society or after its victory, is exactly the reverse. The individual proletarian's interest, when understood correctly, can acquire value not as an abstract possibility but only as an actuality in connection with the victory of class interests."[8] In other words, Lukács states that, in contrast to the bourgeoisie where individual and class interests conflict, in the proletariat the two types of interest coincide. But what does this assertion really mean? The individual interest of the proletarian is to *increase his own property*. If someone should object that the proletarian is defined precisely by the fact that he owns nothing, we can answer that, while this is indeed so, yet his *interest* is to have property or to *acquire* it. If one should then reply that once he has become a proprietor, in a position to dispose of more than just his labor power, he ceases to be proletarian, we conclude that this can only mean that it is in the proletarian's interest not to be one any longer. Our opponent might protest that this is natural, but that the proletarian can stop being one only when the conditions of proletarian existence have been universally eliminated and-or when he suppresses capitalist exploitation. Because he cannot do this as an individual but only as a member of his class, his individual interest therefore coincides with his class interest. However, we reply, it is simply not true that one ceases to be proletarian only when the conditions of proletarian existence are universally abolished. In bourgeois society, as Marx said, the relation between an individual and his class is incidental. The single proletarian can thus cease to be one without transforming the class relationship in the least. And, in effect, it is in every proletarian's interest not to remain one and to *preserve the relations of capitalist society*. But why indeed maintain these relations intact? Because their surpassing—according to the meaning of these relations and to that of interest—is in *nobody's interest*.

Thus, contrary to Lukács' claim, for the proletariat as well as for the bourgeoisie, individual interest and class interest are antithetical. Their "harmony" is therefore always an illusion. Furthermore, the proletariat has no interest in suppressing as a class the relations of bourgeois society. For this reason, class interest cannot be other than an individual alienated interest, which, with respect to individuals, appears as a strange power or an external demand that one may or may not accept. If, then, the individual proletarian's interest consists in increasing his property, in ceasing to be a proletarian, then this alienated, estranged form of his interest must also be expressed in the aspirations of the class interest.

In regard to the bourgeoisie, Lukács writes: "However self evidently individual and class interests have coincided whenever the capitalists confronted other classes (whether the oppressed or other oppressors, e.g., agrarian feudal classes or capitalists of a different country)—whenever, that is, the class is obliged to adopt a position to ensure the general possibility and direction of the oppression—it has nonetheless proved always impossible to unite individual and class interests once the realization of that oppression has become concrete, once the question has been posed: who is to become the oppressor, and whom, how many and to what extent is he to exploit? Class solidarity in the capitalist classes is only possible when they look outward, not when they are concerned only with themselves."[9] But the same can be said of the proletariat

7. "The Role of Morality," *op.cit.*, p. 48.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

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(or, we could use the term "working class" if by "proletariat" one means the class that not only sells its own labor power but also possesses nothing else). It is evident that individual interest and class interest always coincide when the working class sets itself against other classes (either against the oppressors or the working class of other countries, i.e., when it comprehends the important relation between the working class of highly developed nations and those exploited in underdeveloped countries). Yet, it becomes impossible to harmonize individual and class interest when *the realization of the process becomes concretized.* Consider, for example, the insurmountable opposed interests among workers of different sectors or between working classes of diverse "levels"—skilled vs. unskilled, black vs. white workers—where the "public interest" of lower configurations shows all too clearly the true nature of public interest. Undoubtedly, every worker has an interest in drawing the maximum salary with the minimum exertion of effort, i.e., the maximum general equivalent that ownership guarantees him. Of course, the individual proletarian does comply with the public interest of the working class, but only to the point where this interest constitutes a prerequisite for bolstering his individual interest. On the whole, the same phenomenon occurs when the bourgeois subordinates himself to law. In practical terms it is irrelevant whether he does it with the pathos of the *citoyen* or with cynicism. In any case, he agrees not to plunder the other at will in exchange for the assurance that no one can rob him with impunity. However, such subordination does not really denote a coincidence of individual and public interest: "proclamations" to that effect remain always necessarily ideology, false consciousness.

Must we therefore also reject the last phrase of the text cited above? Must we again dispute the assertion that that statement is true only of the capitalist class? No, a proletarian class solidarity *can* exist, even internally. If a bourgeois were fraternal with another bourgeois, not only outwardly but inwardly as well, this would contradict his essence as private egotistical man. The proletarian, however, can be fraternal with another proletarian. The difference is—and this is the nodal point of the present analysis—that this solidarity cannot be defined as in his own interest. A bourgeois *as such cannot be fraternal with another bourgeois, while a proletarian, precisely as such, can be fraternal with another proletarian.* Nonetheless, it does not follow that "the very solidarity propagated as an unattainable social ideal by the greatest bourgeois thinkers is in fact a living presence in the class interests of the proletariat."[10] Such solidarity is not the product of the proletariat's class interest, but rather of the proletariat's possibility as such not to reduce or transform their own needs to interests. The content of "The Role of Morality" article is solidly founded on the claim to the existence of just such a possibility. Let us add here, going beyond Lukács, that this is a historically evolving possibility which does not belong to the class in abstraction, but, instead, to small or large groups of the exploited and oppressed, which are in a continuous process of concrete constitution.[11]

10. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

11. There are readers who interpret this assertion as a paradoxical expression of Lukácsian radical anti-capitalism. To avoid misunderstanding, it should be realized that their conception of ethics is entirely different from that of Lukács. The latter speaks of ethics as an effective process regulating praxis only when ethics is not alienated, or when the ethical moment can be captured, in the sense that the system of postulates is *internalized independently of any metaphysical premise.* This last delineation is most important. At least among the majority of religious persons, the norm system of religious ethics can be definitely considered as non-internalized. Therefore, it would be an unacceptable oversimplification to assert that the religious man follows

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No one knew better than Lukács that one cannot deduce ethics from interest: "For the bourgeois, morality could only mean—assuming that it exercised any real control over behavior at all—a principle that went beyond class divisions and the existence of a class: in other words, individual morality. This kind of morality unfortunately implies a level of human culture which can become a general factor, effective for the total society, only in a much later epoch."[12] This thought dates back to Lukács' pre-Marxist phase, to the period of *The Theory of the Novel*, which was founded on the "historico-philosophical meaning of Dostoyevsky's work." Even then, the height of humanity represented by ethics and possible only "for the man excluded from class-being" could be realized only when one could exist authentically, in the sense of attaining "the concrete reality of the concrete soul."[13] Thus, proletarian solidarity was already emerging as a possibility, even though Lukács did not here seek or did not find the mediation between social determination and the concrete reality of the concrete soul.[14] The idea of community in that period is a utopia.[15] In "The Role of Morality," however, Lukács is no longer proposing utopias; here we find the responsible position of a politician faced with the already seriously threatened Hungarian councils republic. In this essay, Lukács seeks the mediation between individual interest and morals (pure ethics) by defining it, in the case of the proletariat, as *class ethics*. "Class morality...will lead humanity into a new spiritual epoch, into, as Engels says, the 'realm of freedom'."[16] Because this mediation was theoretically possible, Lukacs was forced to presume "the same direction for individual and class interest."[17] Without presuming this sameness of orientation, perhaps class ethics would have something to do with law, but it would necessarily have nothing to do with ethics. Even so, the acceptance of such a viewpoint is disecredited not only by the theoretical objections raised above—which could also be false—nor just by facts—which it is impossible but also superfluous to discuss here—but by history itself. As happened with other important leaders of the movement, Lukács' *citoyen* brand of pathos combined with the Fichtean influence obfuscated reality for him. The force of his pathos, however, was sufficiently great to give rise to this theoretical construct based in his thorough study of authentic contemporary problems. In fact, what emerges from this article with great clarity, even for those who are not familiar with the experiences of the Hungarian dictatorship, is that history was already beginning to render its implications concrete. From the assertion that individual proletarian interest and class

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religious precepts exclusively on the basis of the "reciprocity" principle, through which—once he was sure that God, too, can sleep alone for one moment and he knew of that monent—he would be capable of committing the gravest of sins. In contrast, a truly religious man could not commit acts that would displease God, not even if he knew that, in all probability, God would never know of it. And, indeed, in bourgeois society there are genuinely religious persons, although they may be disposed toward a complete negation of religion. But a man who is still in need of God for internalizing ethical postulates is not completely free.

12. "The Role of Morality," *op.cit.*, p. 50.

13. G. Lukács, "Halalos fiatalsag" (Mortal Youth), in *Magyar Irodalom—Magyar Kultura* (Budapest, 1970), p. 116.

14. In the article cited, Lukács speaks of the ideology of the proletariat and of its idea of solidarity: "The ideology of the proletariat and its conception of solidarity is still today so abstract that it is incapable of producing, beyond weapons for the class struggle, an authentic ethics functioning through all manifestations of life."

15. Cf. Ferenc Fehér, *Das Bundnis von Béla Balasz und Lukács bis zum ungarischen Revolution, 1918* (manuscript).

16. "The Role of Morality," *op.cit.*, p. 50.

17. *Ibid.*

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interest coincide and have the same orientation, which constitutes the possibility of a class ethics and of surpassing the dichotomy between selfish interest and pure ethics, it should follow that, if a proletarian does not by his own action contribute to the construction of this bridge, he comes into conflict not only with his class interest but with his own individual interest as well. Naturally, there are those unaware of their own interest who, therefore, act against it; but there are others, too, who while conscious of it, disregard their own interest and act according to ethics. Yet, how is it possible that many, not just the exceptions, act against their own interests, although these interests in no way conflict with and, in fact, are in accordance with the public interest, in no way conflict with, but rather affirm ethics—ethics which, in addition, are propagated by all means at the disposal of the existing socio-political order? Ethical rationalism necessarily fails because reason is useless when it conflicts with interest. But why does reason fail in relation to interest?

One can in no way deduce ethics from selfish interest. In "class ethics" there is no disagreement between egotistic and moral interest; but the praxis of a social group lacking power unfolds through an alienated regulating process that, though not codified and, therefore, "officially" non-juridical, still parallels law by means of its function and its operating mechanism. Thus, even "class ethics" is after all only the ideological expression of "class interest," as Lukács' article clearly demonstrates. In fact, in spite of its untenability or the inadequate grasp of its principle, "The Role of Morality" remains an ingenious piece of writing. Specifically, it forecasts that when inclinations and passing moods prevail over interests (or better still, when individual selfish interest prevails over the *morals* of the proletarian community represented by the realm of freedom), "they create for themselves a legal order by means of which the proletariat compels its individual members, the proletarians, to act in accordance with their class interests. The proletariat then exercises dictatorship even against itself."[18]

"They also, however—and we must not disguise the problem from ourselves—involve great dangers for the future. If, on the one hand, the proletariat creates its own labor discipline, if the labor system of the proletarian state is built on a moral basis, then the external compulsion of the law will automatically cease with the abolition of the class structure of society. In other words, the state will wither away. This liquidation of the class structure will of itself create the beginning of true human history: as Marx prophesied and hoped. If, on the other hand, the proletariat adopts a different course, it will be obliged to create for itself a legal order which cannot be abolished automatically through historical progress. In that case, a tendency could evolve that would endanger both the physiognomy and the achievement of the ultimate objective. For if the proletariat is compelled to create a legal order in this way, that legal order must itself be overthrown—and who can tell what convulsions and sufferings will be caused by the transition from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom via such a circuitous path?"[19]

18. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

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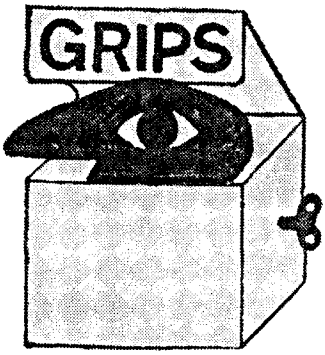

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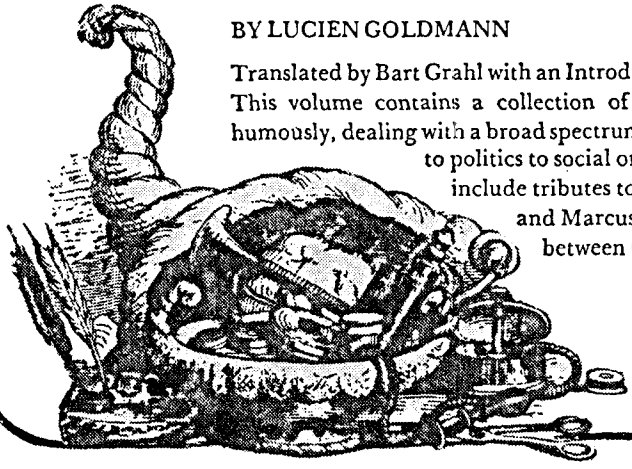

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REVIEWS:

Alastair Davidson. *Antonio Gramsci: Toward an Intellectual Biography.* Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1977. 337 plus xvi pages.

Alastair Davidson's new biography of Gramsci is on the whole balanced in judgment, straightforward in style, and, unlike many other works on Gramsci, departs from no sectarian *parti pris*. As a general introduction for the uninitiated, it is eminently readable without being simplistic, flawed only by a propensity to toss off casually the term *dialectical* to embellish rank truisms (e.g., "Naturally there was a dialectical relation between how he felt and what he wrote at the time"). If Davidson's narrative will disappoint those expecting to learn something new either conceptually or factually, it nevertheless has the virtue of presenting a clear snapshot of the foremost Italian Marxist; then again, snapshots are by nature superficial.

Davidson opens his book with an obvious question: Why another biography of Gramsci? Aside from the fact that more information has become available since the Cammett and Fiori volumes, Davidson quite rightly asserts the need for an *intellectual biography*, one that would reconstitute Gramsci's theoretical development in light of his political engagement within the twentieth-century Italian historical context. This certainly struck a responsive chord. Given the present "Gramsci craze," what we clearly do *not* need is simply another work descriptively laying out what Gramsci the man did and wrote, but rather a critical analysis that might: (1) rigorously treat formative intellectual influences upon the young *and* imprisoned Gramsci, while at the same time lending interpretive coherence to the often disjointed, fragmentary nature of Gramsci's writings; (2) dispassionately reconstruct the historical framework within which he operated (long-term developmental patterns, opposing forces, contending ideologies, leading beliefs, etc.); and (3) judge the theoretical and strategic adequacy of Gramsci in light of all this.

Measured against such criteria, Davidson's book falls short of what one might reasonably expect. While he is at times effective in chronologically specifying some of the mediations between theory and practice in Gramsci's life, his study as a whole lacks theoretical and historical depth. If this is, as he suggests, an intellectual biography, it is not a *critical* one. Too intent upon, as he puts it, doing "justice to a great man," Davidson instead does injustice to the reader who seeks to go beyond the narrowly descriptive. Not once in more than 270 pages can the author find a single flaw or, for that matter, make a significant judgment as to Gramsci's perception, analysis or practice. Theoretically, we are offered wooden caricatures of Spaventa, Labriola and Croce; conceptual affinities or divergences with Gramsci are shallow in treatment. Historically, we are one-sidedly presented with Gramsci's analysis of events, as if it were a foregone conclusion that such analysis was itself accurate or, in the heat of battle and polemics, even intended to be accurate.

Biography, especially intellectual biography, is no mean task. Not only must the author have an intimate knowledge of the personality in question, but an objective and intuitive sense of his times—the effects of major events, changes in public opinion, nuances, the gray areas of life. While Davidson demonstrates an admirable command of Gramsci and material immediately related to Gramsci, he shows little comprehension of the broader historical context—not even phenomena about which Gramsci wrote and upon which Gramsci acted (the peculiar nature of Turin's industrial development, the 1919-20 *biennio rosso*, the rise of fascism and its subsequent consolidation of power). One gets the distinct impression that Davidson, outside of Gramsci proper, has yet to consult any primary sources (newspapers of the

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time, documents in public and private archives) or, with the exception of Spriano's labor history, any of the major secondary sources (Castronovo, Abrate, Pepe, Maione, De Felice, Cordova, Melograni, Catalano).

Instead of subtle, well-articulated historical reconstruction, Davidson falls into a typical "Marxist" trap: reducing history to a Manichean struggle between revolutionaries and reactionaries, those with us and those against us. Since we allegedly know who we are, we can infer that adversaries must necessarily be reactionary and therefore unworthy of serious consideration. The factory council movement, for example, was a heroic struggle; its defeat cannot be attributed to poor conceptualization and strategy, much less skillful practice on the part of the industrialists, but rather to repression and betrayal. Were the world now or then so simple!

Apart from this posture towards history, Davidson at times is simply wrong (inaccurate) and illogical. He claims that from April 1921 until the March on Rome (October 1922), the fascists were in "definitive control of Turin," suggesting thereby that the dramatic ebb in mass agitation and relative isolation of the *ordinovisti* was due primarily to repression. In fact, as any student of Italian fascism knows, Turin was one of the few cities never conquered before the March on Rome. True, the *camera del lavoro* was burned down in an isolated, dramatic episode, but this hardly constitutes "definitive control"—especially when measured against the fascist military-like occupation of the Po Valley. In the factories, streets and politics of Turin, fascism had been an insignificant factor until the March on Rome. Only after Mussolini had come to power did local fascists attempt a major punitive expedition "in grand style" (the *fatti di Torino*, December 1922—curiously, Davidson doesn't mention this, although *Ordine Nuovo* was one of its targets).

Elsewhere Davidson rather simplistically concurs with Gramsci's belief that in 1924 "capitalism in Italy was collapsing and revolution was possible." Evidence: the assassination of Matteotti, a socialist deputy, led to "a wave of anti-fascist feeling in the country." What did anti-fascist feeling, the result of a political assassination, have to do with the presumed collapse of capitalism? Had he bothered to check relevant statistics, Davidson would have found that the period 1922-25, far from being one of imminent collapse, was the most intense period of industrial expansion ever realized in Italy before the "economic miracle" of the 1950s. The index of historical production (1938 equals 100) rose from 54 in 1921 to 83 in 1925, a 54 percent increase in four years (superior to that of England, France, Germany and the United States for the same period). Failure to check relevant data is one thing, inference another: that the survival or collapse of Italian capitalism was dependent upon the fortunes of fascism in 1924-25. In fact, of the entire bourgeois bloc the industrialists were the least committed to fascism; paradoxically, they were the last to champion syndical freedom (including preservation of the *commissioni interne*) during the fall of 1925, while the left was divided and ineffective and the masses demoralized to the point that no general strikes or dramatic demonstrations of any kind were even entertained in the wake of the Matteotti murder.

Given the current state of historical knowledge, it is patently absurd to depict Turin's industrialists and Confindustria (the national peak association) as "extremely reactionary." In relation to whom? Upon what grounds? Simply because they resisted factory councils and preferred dealing with trade unions? Without repeating substantive points raised in an earlier critique of Gramsci's analysis of the industrialists and factory councils (*Telos* 31, Spring 1977), let me suggest that by contemporary

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European standards Italian industrialists were judged to be the most liberal and progressive. Confindustria did not, as Davidson categorically states, wish to "crush the working class," but rather sought an institutionalized *modus vivendi* with its syndical counterpart, the Socialist CGL. The industrial association had its own liberal-technocratic vision of factory relations, not all that distinct, as Gramsci himself maintained, from that of the CGL, committed to "industrial legality." Factory councils, to be sure, had no place in this scheme, either for Confindustria or for the CGL—both of whom regarded these autonomous, non-contractual entities with apprehension. If resistance to factory councils is the sole measure by which to judge Italian industrialists as reactionary, where indeed in the West were non-reactionary industrialists? Or are industrialists simply reactionary by definition? If resistance to factory councils is the relevant test of being reactionary, how can one judge Lenin's early substitution of one-man factory rule for factory councils in Russia at exactly the same time that Gramsci, in the name of communism, was promoting councils in Italy? Or, for that matter, Gramsci's manifest approval (not mentioned by Davidson) in 1921 of such Bolshevik practices as devitalizing the soviets and the Kronstadt repression? The point is that Davidson, despite available evidence, never felt compelled to develop a historical understanding of the Italian industrialists, Gramsci's major antagonists. The fact that they were liberal rather than reactionary raises questions that go well beyond crude, black-white contrasts, questions concerning the very nature of industrial rationality itself, about which Gramsci demonstrated far greater inquisitiveness than his biographer.

In fact, there is no substantive treatment by Davidson of Gramsci's analysis of industrial rationality as a general phenomenon or with special reference to Italy, a country still led by a pre-industrial *classe dirigente*. Having depicted industrialists as reactionary enemies, Davidson glosses over the ambivalence that both Gramsci and his friend Gobetti felt toward an industrial "hero" (Gramsci's term) such as Agnelli, founder of Fiat. If as a speculator and capitalist Agnelli was attacked, he was nevertheless admired as an "organizer of production," as a skilled and effective administrator, and most of all as an agent of modernization (preferable, without doubt, to the parasitic traditional bourgeois, schooled for the liberal professions with pompous disdain regarding commercial-industrial activity). Agnelli had exposed Turin, if not Italy, to a new industrial world where, as Castronovo has written recently, "the norms of 'efficiency' and 'rationality,' co-joined with a change in the internal composition of the workforce, transformed Fiat into a new, lucid productive machine where implements and rhythmic syncopations were regulated from above by a group of new managers, a staff of engineers and department heads who guided the firm through a process of general renovation."

Gramsci, like many of his contemporaries, tried to make sense of this new world of the assembly line, the material testing laboratory, the international sales office and the recreational facilities, the health services, and in-service training courses for upwardly mobile workers. He tried to comprehend the enigmatic Agnelli: autocratic and indomitable, yet also respected by his workers as an innovator, a builder and a collaborator—the boss who, as Gobetti noted, "well knew the value of forms and gestures," visiting the shop and chatting with his men. Several weeks after the famed factory occupations had ended, 3,000 Fiat workers attended the funeral of Agnelli's mother, during which, according to *Corriere della Sera,* "one of the members of the *commissione interna* of Fiat Centro, a regional socialist officer, approached Commendatore Agnelli and said in a loud voice: 'Return with us.' A representative of

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the clerical workers, in the name of all the others, expressed the same desire."

More often than not, Gramsci uncritically accepted industrial rationality; as with Lenin, he believed that practices like Taylorism, stripped of capitalist influence, were progressive if not emancipatory. With mechanization and the routinization of tasks, Gramsci actually believed that the worker's mind would be free while on the job for higher pursuits. He never dealt with the concept of reification proper and thus could not have applied it to industrial life; nor did he anticipate the possibility that science and technology might become political as well as productive forces—a new model of efficient domination and an ersatz ideology for classical liberalism. Moreover, Gramsci never wondered, as did some of his contemporaries, whether industrial society—capitalist or socialist—might not be more spiritually oppressive than past stages of civilization (e.g., Max Weber's image of industrial society as an "iron cage," a polar night of mechanized petrification).

Yet what separates Gramsci from rank apologists for this brave new world, both bourgeois and Bolshevik, was his transcendent concern for meaning and subjectivity; that collective endeavor (productive, political and cultural) be based upon the self-awareness and the self-activity of the common man who in the very process of coming to grips with himself and others would no longer be "common." His concept of *autogoverno* was not narrowly political or administrative, but cultural in the broadest sense; Gramsci's concern was for active subjects, not passive objects. The grotesque image of the little man in the gray flannel suit or the equally grotesque image of the robust, lobotomized blue-collar worker would have found no place in Gramsci's vision, imperfect as it was. Surprisingly, Davidson has little or nothing to say on this the central problem of "Western Marxism."

To be fair, Davidson subtitled this volume: "Toward an Intellectual Biography." Presumably, one is to view the work as a preliminary step toward a more comprehensive project—richer in historical nuance, theoretically more probing, methodologically critical. How nice is would be, then, if one might actually be able to detect some hypothesis, some argumentation, some evidence (factual *and* counter-factual) and some conclusion—all in "dialectical" relation, naturally. Short of that, the question remains unanswered: Why another biography of Gramsci?

Franklin Adler

Susan Buck-Morss. *The Origins of Negative Dialectics: Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin and the Frankfurt School.* New York: The Free Press, 1977. $14.95.

In her important introductory chapter, Susan Buck-Morss rightly stresses the significance of Critical Theory for young West German intellectuals after World War II. In contrast to the American situation, spaces in which questions of Marxism could once again be discussed were opening in the vicinity of the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt. Buck-Morss convincingly sketches this learning process that ended in antagonism when Horkheimer and Adorno proved unwilling to participate in the political practice of the extra-parliamentary opposition. Leftist students turned away from Critical Theory, treating it like the proverbial dead dog after 1970, thereby allowing it to be taken up by young conservatives who concerned themselves only with the aesthetic character of Adorno's and Benjamin's writings. As the formation of ideologically rigid parties and sects came to characterize the second phase of the

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German student revolt, the younger associates of the Frankfurt Institute, especially Habermas, were forced onto the defensive. It seems to me no coincidence that the first historical survey of the Frankfurt School was written by an American, that is, an outsider. Martin Jay's *Dialectical Imagination,* a detached report of the history of ideas, could not have appeared in 1973 in West Germany. Whoever wrote about Adorno, Marcuse, Benjamin, and Habermas at that time had to defend his or her position in connection with a clearly defined political debate.

Buck-Morss' work is a continuation of Jay's in many respects; she, too, is primarily concerned with exact reconstruction of the early phases of the Frankfurt School, which are often overshadowed and distorted by the later tradition. Jay's survey left gaps and called for corrections. His attempt to represent the members of the Institute as a school could not have been achieved without forcing matters somewhat. In her own inquiry, Buck-Morss convincingly shows, for example, that Adorno's aesthetic theory as a whole cannot so readily be placed in the Hegel-Marx tradition. She tries to prove that the roots of Adorno's theorizing were more deeply influenced by Benjamin than has previously been recognized.

This thesis initially appears odd in view of the Adorno-Benjamin controversy in which the unyielding parties stressed the contrast, not the connection, between their theories of art. Yet Buck-Morss attempts to demonstrate that the debates between Adorno and Benjamin themselves were so rigorously argued *because* they were friends who believed that they shared a fundamental position. The urgency with which Adorno took up his somewhat older friend's essays and outlines is, in Buck-Morss' view, attributable to his desire that Benjamin stay within the framework that Benjamin himself had begun to develop. Thus, beneath Adorno's protests lay not hostility but anxiety in the face of his friend's approach to an orthodox Marxism which could not adequately assimilate Benjamin's initial program.

The manner in which Buck-Morss sets Benjamin and Adorno apart from the other members of the Institute is also interesting. In the customary view, Benjamin's method stands apart, as exemplified in Horkheimer and Adorno's criticism of the insufficiently dialectical character of the "Paris Arcades" project. But Buck-Morss tries to show that Adorno as well as Benjamin developed a concept of immanent criticism that Horkheimer and the other members did not share. In her view, the method of immediate deciphering of the social significance of cultural phenomena differentiates Adorno's and Benjamin's approach from that of Horkheimer and Marcuse, who placed greater emphasis on mediation through systematic theory.

She attempts, in other words, a synthesis of textual analysis and biographical-historical criticism. Since Jay had already placed the Frankfurt School in the context of Western Marxism, a closer consideration of particular biographical circumstances made good sense. And Buck-Morss' analysis of the personal relationships, which have been anything but insignificant for the development of specific texts, is admirable. As an example of her careful presentation of the friendships and tensions, Chapter 10 describes the troubled pair, Benjamin and Adorno, on the occasion of the latter's visit to Paris (October 1937), trying to reconstruct a common foundation after the earlier tensions resulting from the evaluation of mass culture. She further depicts Benjamin's efforts that year to reach a deeper understanding with Horkheimer. It was definitely necessary to illuminate these complicated, highly ambivalent relationships in order to correct the one-sided picture that grew out of the Adorno-Benjamin controversy of the late 1960s.

Ultimately, though, the meticulousness of historical reconstruction is a weakness as

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well as a strength, for it is focused on Adorno and his work, the exegesis of which stands in the way of a thoroughly critical analysis. In other words, since the Adorno-Benjamin friendship stands at the center of the study, one expects equally extensive treatment of Benjamin's work.[1] In fact, Benjamin's development from an idealist to a Marxist position is sketched only cursorily, hardly even considering the extensive literary-critical activity in the years 1929-1933. Where Buck-Morss does present Benjamin's materialist approach, she does so only in connection with its bearing on Adorno's perspective. To exaggerate somewhat, it appears as if Benjamin developed his materialist theory of art in order to be criticized by Adorno. Moreover, the question of the topicality of Benjamin's position, which stood in the center of the controversy between 1967 and 1973, is not seriously considered.

The problem is crystallized in Chapter 9, where Buck-Morss treats Benjamin's essays, "The Author as Producer" and "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Both are controversial studies that cannot easily be incorporated into the thinking of the Frankfurt School. The chapter opens by depicting the personal situations of Benjamin and Adorno as background to the disagreement in which Benjamin was coming increasingly under Brecht's influence, while Gershom Scholem, representing theological as against materialistic perspectives, stood in opposition, with Adorno in the end standing as mediator, requiring dialectical balance between materialistic and theological modes of thought. From this point, the critique of Benjamin follows, as Buck-Morss reconstructs Adorno's objections to the first outline of the "Paris Arcades" work, and his criticisms of the "Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" essay, whose content is briefly reported. Anyone expecting a meta-critical reflection on the debate will be disappointed. The presentation remains at the biographical-intellectual level. At the close of the chapter, Benjamin appears as a kind of helpless loser who lacked the strength to succeed against his stronger friends. What chances are wasted here! The materials have been available since the critical edition of Benjamin edited by Rolf Tiedemann; the genesis and impact of the controversy can be reconstructed down to the finest details and the necessary conclusions drawn from them.

Contrary to its intention to reconstruct objectively the story, the book is finally *parti pris*—in favor of the Frankfurt School, specifically Adorno. This is clear not only in the treatment of Benjamin, but also in Buck-Morss' presentation of the dispute between the German student movement and Adorno, which is all too easily pushed aside as a misunderstanding. Yet Buck-Morss is fully aware of the problematic character of Adorno's position, which transfers into the theory itself or into art the social practice to which the theory remains committed—undoubtedly in the hope that, if not social change, a change in consciousness could emerge. Her criticism at the end of Chapter 2 touches exactly this position which provoked the student movement: the impossibility of translating the art criticism into political consciousness and finally into social praxis. Buck-Morss writes: "The fact of the matter is that Adorno's talk of the mediation between intellectual praxis and political practice remained abstract and vague, with no explication of the social medium which might serve as a conduit for this

1. Absent is a familiarity with the more recent Benjamin research. Habermas important essay about Benjamin's criticism of 1972 has not really been taken into consideration and, correspondingly, the response of Peter Bürger (1973) is overlooked. The later works of Wiesenthal (1973), Paetzold (1974), Pfotenhauer (1975), Witte (1976), to name only a few, are not dealt with. This makes itself negatively conspicuous to those parties who concern themselves with Benjamin.

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mediation, once the role of the Party was rejected."

Yet this critique hangs in the air, an isolated observation not methodically pursued in the study. The result is a gap between the author's political and scholarly convictions: whereas she admits the problems of Critical Theory on the political level, her selectively meticulous historical reconstruction is in the end apologetic.[2] This circumstance probably has two causes. First, the author stands close to what might be termed Frankfurt School orthodoxy as represented by Rolf Tiedemann, the editor of Adorno's works. Second, the present situation of the Adorno discussion is itself contradictory. On the one side, it is obvious that the polemics of the early 1970s did not do justice to Adorno's theory; on the other side, we are aware that a return to Critical Theory in its orthodox form is no longer possible. The solution to this dilemma appears to lie in the historical approach, but Buck-Morss does not follow it consistently enough, and thus cannot really clarify the relation between the history of Critical Theory and the present. Her book's achievement consists in its precise analysis of the complex relationships among various members of the Institute, and the bearing of these relationships on their work. As a historical commentary on the early phase of the Frankfurt School, the study is required reading.

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2. In spite of this care, the author is mislead from time to time in her contentions which are obviously not consistent with the historical facts. As it says in the second chapter about Lukács' literary criticism in the *Linkskurve*: "The same year Lukács began writing for the Party journal *Die Linkskurve* in support of proletarian literature and in protest against all attempts to distinguish art from propaganda." The opposite is true: Lukács struggles with all means at hand against a form of proletarian literature which apparently no longer knows how to distinguish between reportage and the art of the novel. He struggles for the bourgeois heritage and its concept of the closed art work and against the attempt of Brecht and other authors who want to carry over the concept of socialist art also onto form.

John Fekete. *The Critical Twilight: Explorations in the Ideology of Anglo-American Literary Theory from Eliot to McLuhan.* London, Henley and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977.

The pluralism of "legitimate" approaches to texts characteristic of academic literary studies in the late 1960s and the 1970s, along with American institutions' general tendency to severe historical amnesia, has obscured New Criticism's ideological role from the 1940s on.[1] In *The Critical Twilight,* Fekete clarifies and challenges the

1. This pluralism should not be interpreted as democratization. One important side of it is the expression of the depoliticized social contract of late capitalism: a pluralism of content (including revolutionary content) is promised in exchange for passive reception. Thus, it has become possible to interpret a text from a 'structuralist' perspective, from a 'Marxist' perspective, from a 'psychoanalytical' perspective and sometimes all three magically yield the same result. Or not so magically. This stance of democratic pluralism masks a sameness in dominant underlying assumptions about the nature of literature, its relation to life, the nature of reality and the nature of man. As Fekete puts it, theory involves choice and the answers to questions "about who we are and about how we relate to each other and to nature" (xvi).

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categories of this movement, which he calls "modern bourgeois critical theory"[2] and he seeks to show how they "distort or exclude those structural variables that are essential for any meaningful project of social and human liberation" (xv).

Fekete's structuring of the text reveals the insidious nature and historical continuity of what, following T.S. Eliot, he calls "the tradition." As Raymond Williams points out in his very complimentary foreword to his former student's book,[3] Fekete's "most remarkable contribution is his analysis of what he describes as a 'paradigm in motion,' in which through what appear at first sight to be no more than shifts in critical position and method, there is a decisive movement from defensive reaction [Ransom] through capitulation to a new phase of the social order [Frye] to active agency in its service [McLuhan]" (xiii). The passage from New Criticism to McLuhanacy, through Frye, shows "an irresistable theoretical motion toward social stabilization and the elimination of the active ontological level of human subjectivity" (xviii), a motion that continues and currently rests in structuralism. Essential to this theoretical movement is the tradition's changing definition of the relation of science, social ontology and art to the category of technicism: "If...the New Critics import technicism from the social sphere to the aesthetic sphere, McLuhan subsequently projects aesthetic categories into a social analysis centered in technology" (xviii). In effect, one of Fekete's central arguments is that modern bourgeois critical theory assimilates and neutralizes the romantic protest against the instrumental reason of capitalist social reality, falsely reconciles the century-old split between culture and civilization (ultimately making art a tool for adaptation to a reified civilization), and that it generally represents the "collapse of negativity into the positivity of neocapitalist rationality" (xxiii).

Clearly, Fekete's account complements the Frankfurt School's analyses of bourgeois thought in one-dimensional society, although Fekete suggests that one-dimensional society may have been characteristic only of the transition period from entrepreneurial to corporate capitalism,[4] roughly from the New Deal to the early 1960s.[5] Dealing with the ideology of the transition period, Fekete is guided by two basic theses of Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*: that advanced industrial society can contain change, but that forces exist that could explode containment, among them, art and art criticism.[6] Fekete's conception of the work of art owes much to Lukács' aesthetics and to Kosik's *Dialectic of the Concrete*—the optimism of which seems much more

2. Although Fekete justifies his choice of terminology, it is bothersome to see the doctrines of Ransom, Frye and McLuhan referred to as 'critical theory'—a label usually associated with the Frankfurt School or with Kantian philosophy.

3. The book is a revised version of Fekete's dissertation, supervised by Williams, on: "John Crowe Ransom, Northrop Frye, and Marshall McLuhan: A Theoretical Critique of Some Aspects of North American Critical Theory," University of Cambridge, November 1972. Much of the material in the book has already been published in *Telos*: the section on "McLuhanacy" was in *Telos* 15 (Spring 1973), pp. 75-123; the chapter on the New Criticism in *Telos* 20 (Summer 1974), pp. 2-51; and the chapter on Frye in *Telos* 27 (Spring 1976), pp. 40-60. New is the preface, the opening sections on 19th-century problematics and the foundations of modern critical theory, and the polemical conclusion, entitled "Struggle."

4. Fekete suggests that the ritualistic corporatist Catholicism at the base of McLuhanacy may be the adequate religious expression of corporate capitalism, as Protestantism was for accumulative capitalism. See Note 4, p. 251.

5. McLuhan's waning impact may be parallel to a setback in neocapitalist one-dimensionality in the late 1960s, a change that Fekete evaluates much more optimistically, as more open to real subjectivity and praxis, than, for example, does Paul Piccone in his "The Changing Function of Critical Theory," forthcoming in *New German Critique* 12 (Fall 1977).

6. Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston, 1964), p. xv.

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appropriate to conditions in pre-1968 Prague than to conditions in contemporary North America.

Fekete opens his book with a few chapters on the 19th- and early 20th-century bases of the "tradition." Romantic protest against instrumental reason began as a protest within liberal capitalism. The lack of a social agency to carry this critique of new capitalist forms eventually reduced romantic protest to a socially powerless "abstract negation"; it is here that culture (secondary objectifications) can be said to have broken with civilization (the material production and reproduction of everyday life). Fekete locates the beginning of art's defensive phase, of the "shift from social communication to formal integrity" (6) in Keats. He explains the double fetish of form in the later 19th-century aestheticism as due first to the artist's exclusion from any formative role in the construction of social life and, second, to the artist's protest against the commodification of art. Fekete notes the positive moment of this protest against utilitarianism, but perceives that "the cost of confining aspirations to the realm of culture is the fetish of form as an end in itself. . ." (12). Thus, the romantic protest against the alienation of rationality necessarily collapses into irrationality.

The post-romantics stabilized the culture-civilization split. Matthew Arnold proclaimed culture to be superior to civilization *because* art is ordered, unified and formally perfect. Arnold abandons civilization and locates possibilities for unity in the spiritual realm alone. Thus, his idea of perfectibility (through education) leaves the real bases of alienation untouched and thereby capitulates to alienation. The search for order and unity is characteristic of the tradition in all of its phases. Yet, in all but the latest phase identified by Fekete, unity is discovered *outside* of alienating social reality. The search only becomes actively counterrevolutionary in McLuhan, who claims that unity has already been achieved by civilization itself.

With Pater and the aestheticists, the categories of art are projected onto life. Life is to be lived in the ideal realm as an art; the goal is to intensify personal aesthetic experience. Here, protest yields to hedonism. The world is experienced as the subject's momentary sensation, but the subject of aesthetic experience is passive and contemplative, not constitutive. This impoverished subject, too, perfectly tailored for "*life as consumption*" (xx), becomes part of the social ontology of the tradition, and is finally lauded by McLuhan because of its very passivity.

The tradition's fetish of language has roots in the late 19th-century Symbolist movement, which Fekete characterizes as a hysterical protest against reified language: "The Symbolists tried to divorce meaning (signifiers) from what was meant (signifieds) in their search for an authentic language, and destroyed the structure of traditional discourse in the desperate protest against the social dehumanization of language. Modern critical theory makes a fetish of language, and embraces its principles of order" (16). Already, Fekete notes, Mallarmé claims that literature is made of words and not, as Arnold had claimed, of ideas. It is important to note that Saussure, father of structuralism, formulated his theories in this Symbolist period as well. The drive toward the systematization of the study of literature, with the latter defined as "an order of words," an order stripped of a creating subject and a socio-historical matrix, is always central in the tradition, and this tendency foreshadows McLuhan's eventual reconciliation of culture and civilization. In fact, unlike Weimann, who sees New Criticism as an attack on an undifferentiated Enlightenment,[7] predecessor to

7. Robert Weimann, *"New Criticism" und die Entwicklung bürgerlicher Literaturwissenschaft* (Halle, 1962).

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proletarian revolution, Fekete's critique emphasizes the adequacy of New Criticism and its followers to that moment of the Enlightenment that has always been dominant and against which romantic protest was directed: the progressive rationalization of all aspects of life, the formalization of all content.

The shift of attention from subject to object, which disguised the radical subjectivism of the Pater-Wilde aestheticism, became dominant in the early 20th century. Whereas in the culture-civilization split, the author had been divested of historical praxis, in this next phase, culture itself is split between the creating subject and the created object, and the latter comes to prevail as the only proper object of criticism. The anti-liberal ideology of developing corporate capitalism can be seen in the work of T.E. Hulme. Disgusted with civilization, he and other professed classicists of the tradition[8] rejected the bourgeois revolution, deplored the very idea of the perfectibility of man and the subjectivist claims of romanticism, and instead proposed order and tradition, absolute values above and superior to man. The materialist (Richards) and the idealist (Eliot), immediate forebears of the tradition, justified the fetish of language by describing language as the one ordered thing in a disordered world. Fekete defines "the initial matrix of modern critical theory...as the problematic of organization, balance and order" (21), a matrix located outside of history and that disregards the creating subject.

Eliot's conception of the tradition already involves stabilization. It affirms the past and accepts the present as given, because it has no "perspective of a radically different future" (23), from which to criticize the present. In this section, Fekete points to the tendency toward the spatialization of time[9] in the tradition as follows: "A central aspect of this problematic is the notion that the whole of literature (at least, of European literature) forms an ideal order of simultaneous existence, persistently adjusted, if slightly, and forever preserved as a complete order" (24). With McLuhan, this becomes true of the whole of history.

Richards, as so many thinkers of the first few decades of the 20th century, including Ransom, begins with an attack on positivist science's claim to be exhaustive of reality and ends, not only without having challenged the bases of this alienated science, but with his own positivist aesthetic.[10] Art, as a non-verifiable form of knowledge (as opposed to science) cannot challenge science, but as mythic thought which satisfies emotions, it can save us: through art, we can restore magic to the world by *thinking* in new ways. Richards' quantitative value theory, pointing to McLuhan, reaches into the human psyche and postulates the mind as a system of interests seeking equilibrium. Myth and Enlightenment, as Fekete shows in his analysis of Frye, are no strange bedfellows: myth and mathematical formalism are alike in that they both have "the essence of the *status quo*: cycle, fate and domination of the world reflected as the truth and deprived of hope."[11]

In a later phase, Richards, having absorbed science in myth, and having located the subject-object unity characteristic of poetry not in social ontology but in epistemology

8. Fekete rejects attempts to see the fathers of the tradition as modern romantics, noting that they are professed classicists. See pp. 18-19.

9. Again, this is characteristic of the entire movement and particularly of that structuralism which makes of history an archaeology. Lukács discusses the spatialization of time in *History and Class Consciousness*.

10. Analogous phenomena in German ideology are discussed by Arato, "The Neo-Idealist Defense of Subjectivity" in *Telos* 21 (Fall 1974), pp. 108-161.

11. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York, 1972), p. 27.

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(only in poetry does language accurately yield the correspondence of mind and nature), defines the task of criticism as follows: "to recall that poetry is the supreme use of language, man's chief co-ordinating instrument, in the service of the most integral purposes of life; and to explore, with thoroughness, the intricacies of the modes of language as working modes of the mind" (34-35). "In this way," says Fekete, "the modern tradition, right at its inception, has a fully contemporary ring, linked at the extremities with the Russian formalism that preceded it and the French Structuralism that now dominates the field, and, through the course of the development of the tradition, with the emphases of Ransom, of Frye and, especially, of McLuhan" (35). The reduction of human life to "epistemological dimensions" (20) is also characteristic of the tradition in all of its phases.

Ransom, most active in the period of the Keynesian reorganization of capitalism, represents the tradition's phase of defensive reaction, i.e., New Criticism is seen as the end product of a right-wing ideological opposition to developing corporate capitalism —an opposition eventually integrated within the dominant social rationality (here, via the universities). Perhaps most interesting is Fekete's discussion of Ransom's Agrarian period, to which he attributes *God Without Thunder* (1930). Agrarianism, the South's reaction to forced industrialization by the North, rejected mechanistic society but did not seek to eradicate it. Instead, it mystified the notion of a Southern past that offered an 'aesthetic' as opposed to a mechanistic (read also as chaotic) life. Capitalism and its relation to nature *per se* are not rejected; rather, the ills of monopoly capitalism are rejected and the desire is to return to an earlier, agricultural form. Fekete notes that, in this plan, *not everyone* need "return to the land." Ironically, the plan for a Southern agricultural society, which would coexist with an industrialized North, would *need* the intervention characteristic of the neocapitalist state.

In Agrarian poetics, Ransom offers contemplation, the glorification of passivity, as the only possible reaction against alienating activity. It is his collapsing of alienation and objectification, characteristic, too, of the agrarian social program, that ends in the fetish of pre-categorical immediacy, the longing for the 'primitive' past, the acceptance of alienation in the present, and the renunciation of human praxis as a hope for the construction of a new future. Ransom's ontology includes three moments: (1) dehistoricized sensuous experience; (2) dehistoricized conceptualization; and (3) the recovery of sensuous content through images (art). His critique of science is *not* a critique of a historical form of science but of the project itself: experience is superior to any explanation of the experience and contemplation is superior to the utilitarianism characteristic of science. In bypassing objectification, he leaves us with this polarization of experience and rationality, contemplation and utility. And, as Fekete points out, because Ransom does not see that the alienated scientific 'attitude' is itself contemplative, he merely opposes an alienated art to an alienated science. The study of art, itself defined as imitation of the phenomenal world, is claimed to be as objective as is science. Because he conceives the subject as contemplative, the object as preconstituted, and the subject-object relation as cognitive, his aesthetic 'attitude' ends up with the same objectivistic structure as the scientific 'attitude' that he deplores. The defensive reaction claims that poetry is a form of knowledge, knowledge of particularity, and its method is close reading of individual texts. Fekete argues that what on the surface appears as a radical objectivism is really a radical empiricist subjectivism, the result of a false reconciliation of subject and object in thought. The critic projects the logical constructs of mind on the poem and then proceeds to analyze these constructs as the structure of the poem itself. Indeed, Ransom allows the

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aesthetic 'attitude' (defined in various ways as an opposition to the scientific attitude), to become a mental approach to the whole of reality, thus again locating unity in thought and leaving social reality untouched.

In the New Critical phase—late 1930s and 1940s—literary criticism becomes a new scientific specialization, penetrating the universities, journals and texts on how to study literature. It must here be noted that the dominance of New Criticism was also a successful reaction against vulgar leftist criticism, which reduced the work of art to social and economic fact.[12] The advance of New Criticism's claim for the autonomy and transhistoricity of art is acknowledged, and Fekete notes that the left must take responsibility for its inability to transcend orthodox, outdated theory.[13]

Whereas in the defensive earlier phase science was repudiated by Ransom as a threat to civilization, now art and science are complements, and art is seen as a 'compensation' for the mass of men who cannot complete their experience. This now-familiar aspect of the tradition is referred to as a reified humanism that accepts alienation as man's fate, poses a rigid subject-object duality, employs a reified scientific objectivist methodology, and offers the services of an elite group which holds the key to values (the priest-interpreters): "In general, the separation of the object from the modes and nature of its appropriation and reception is an expression of the triumph of commodity fetishism over aesthetic defetishization" (81). In the New Critical reified humanism, art's role is to lend us morale, to help us feel this alienated world as non-alienated. The success of this program for Ransom himself is astounding: "At the end of his official career in 1959, Ransom no longer sided with the 'Old Order' but talked 'for the other side,' in arguing that 'not the dull sheltered Garden, but the unknown forbidding world at large, is what we must identify in all piety...as "the best of all possible worlds" ' " (99).

Frye's mythological structuralism, the classification of literature as suprahistorical system, constitutes the phase in which modern bourgeois critical theory capitulates to neocapitalist reality. Whereas New Criticism stressed particularity, Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) attempts to unify the cultural field by locating recurring principles of literature, particularly genres and archetypes. New Criticism places the individual work in no broader context; Frye describes its context as "literature as an order of words" (109). For Frye, literature *does not* imitate life. Thus, he proposes a static two-worlds theory in which science represents the 'is' and art represents the 'ought.' 'Desire' (itself prehistorical and eternally the same), as the motor of history, links culture and civilization in that all human activity is seen as the futile attempt to realize what is desired. There is no place for the qualitatively new here, because, for Frye, man does not change through his activity. Poetry expresses "a vision of the goal of work and the forms of desire" (110), and, since desire is always the same, so essentially is poetry. Again, we are reminded of the relation between myth and enlightenment: "The absorption of factuality, whether into legendary prehistory or into mathematical formalism, the symbolical relation of the contemporary to the mythic process in the

12. To complement Fekete's analysis of the professionalization of literary criticism, cf. Peter U. Hohendahl's *Literaturkritik und Oeffentlichkeit* (Munich, 1974), pp. 128-150. Hohendahl discusses the role of the mass media in limiting literary criticism to marginality. From this perspective, we can see professionalization and specialized journals as the system's reaction to the left journalistic criticism that preceded New Criticism.

13. As Kosik put it, formalism is merely the abstract complement of sociologism: both see works and society as separable phenomena.

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rite or to the abstract category in science, makes the new appear as the predetermined, which is accordingly the old."[14]

Frye's scientific system of classification of individual works by structural analogy claims to democratize criticism, taking it out of the hands of the New Critical "priest interpreters." But Fekete demonstrates that this so-called democratization is really a capitulation to greater oppression, in that it destroys the specificity of works and radically cuts literature off from life. Art and criticism are no longer available as moments of human liberation (117). "This criticism requires of the critic that he have experience of literature, not experience of life, and aims at structure not content" (115). Thus, for Frye (and for many of the later structuralists), poetry is a response only to poetry.

In Frye's next phase, the rest of the 'verbal universe' is identified as social mythology (belief myths, concern myths) which must function to bring about social cohesion. Literary criticism can now analyze all cultural phenomena (reduced to verbal constructs), and history itself reduces to myth. The epistemological reduction allows for unlimited reification: "...the most decisive problem in the whole theory is formulating the relations between material life and imaginative life simply on an epistemological level" (130). Fekete concludes the section on Frye by pointing ahead to McLuhan. In the period in which "technological progress realizes the imaginary, when the aesthetic merges with the political and the economic, the theory can neither resist the change nor account for it, and necessarily yields to McLuhan's theory of a technology-dominated social-biological metabolism that permits virtually unlimited scope to reification on all levels and, by specifying myth and analogy as the fundamental epistemological and ontological structures, allows virtually unlimited rationalization" (131).

In what Fekete describes as McLuhan's second phase (1952-1958), he already effects a complete reintegration of art and life, culture and civilization, by projecting the aesthetic categories of the tradition onto the *whole* of social life. The same closed, formally perfect system of art is now said to be characteristic of the whole of society, defined in terms of its technology: "by limiting the analysis to aesthetic categories, McLuhan allows these forms [mass media] a permanent aesthetic closure that falsely separates them from their role and origin in oppression" (157). In this reconciliation, "...McLuhan represents the counterrevolutionary pole of an aesthetic of social life, as Marcuse represents the revolutionary pole" (148).

In McLuhan's mature theory, which Fekete sees as having begun in 1959 with 'the medium is the message,' art and science are to help us adapt to a closed technological system that is fully determinant. An immediate identity between humans and their objectifications, particularly technologies, is inherent in McLuhan's sensory extension theory, in which the senses correspond to and are changed by the dominant technology, in which technologies are strategies of the organism to exert equilibrium (164). In McLuhan's claim that technologies *are* us, alienation is *denied*: "*The assertion of identity between subject and object, between human beings and the forces that dominate them, is the precise ideological form of one-dimensional reification*" (170).

Epistemologically, that which we attempt to know is what is already inside of us (which *is* the outside—Fekete labels McLuhan's theory an idealist materialism). The end of the extension theory is the technological simulation of consciousness, and the

14. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of the Enlightenment, op.cit.*, p. 27.

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artist's role as apologist is to reveal that which we have all sensed but of which the majority of us have only perceived a part. Art reproduces the immediacy of the outside world, which *is* the real content of our new (technologically altered) psyches. Thus, McLuhan neutralizes the Richards-Eliot protest against civilization's dissociation of sensibility, which art was to unify, attributing the phenomenon to an already surpassed, inferior, visual age of print. In McLuhan's words: "art is precise advance knowledge of how to cope with the psychic and social consequences of the next technology..." (179), and "exact information of how to rearrange one's psyche in order to anticipate the next blow from our own extended faculties" (179).

The tradition's craving for stability and order, which history had seemed to make impossible, is resolved by McLuhan. History for McLuhan is a history of changes in communications technology. Posing the historical triad, tribalism-detribalization-retribalization, McLuhan's mature theory places his first-phase critique of mechanical society in the past epoch of detribalization and offers a full-blown affirmation of our organic, automational Electric Age, which retribalizes the world as global village. The claim is that "the attainment of technological rationality is the end of history" (140). Seen in the light of his extension theory, history is the organism's struggle to remain constant, achieved with the help of our technology. Thus, history is the evolution of a cybernetic system of disease, whose goal is the health of stabilization (165). Fekete makes it clear that the point here is not to eliminate change but to effectively control it, and McLuhan has in fact suggested that media be used to reprogram the human nervous system, to stabilize the emotional climate of whole populations. History as immediately and simultaneously available information, read and analyzed as recurrent myth, dismisses 'history as radical change' as an inferior, surpassed phase.

McLuhan's active counterrevolution lies in the fact that he not only embraces neocapitalism's tendency to further rationalization and one-dimensionality, but polemicizes against alternatives as well. His praise of world, or tribal, unity is really praise of U.S. hegemony, although this is masked by the fact that McLuhan in his mature theory never speaks of the power relations behind technology but only of technology itself: "Ultimately...the electric age is welcomed as the objective correlative of the ordered totality that is the fundamental programmatic end of the whole tradition...although McLuhan is prepared to pay it, the electric totality exacts a high price: it requires 'utter human docility' " (145).

I have only highlighted Fekete's analysis of McLuhan's mature theory. Most interesting is Fekete's analysis of the 'paradigm in motion,' which involves not only the movement from Ransom to McLuhan but also the stages that characterize McLuhan's individual theoretical development: "the center of gravity of the critical attitude moves from subjectivity to objectivity, and elements subjectively desired in first stage problematics (for example, unified sensibility, harmonious balance of opposites, or organic, non-mechanical culture) appear objectively given in third stage problematics, but as purely involuntary developments, without their humanist value content" (146). In his conclusion to McLuhan, Fekete attacks the methodology which "abstracts one moment [technology] from a complex of objectifications produced by a specific historical praxis, and assumes its etiological primacy" (180-181). The adequacy of 'McLuhanacy' to the one-dimensional transition phase of capitalism is clear: "*Technologism*, or reified object-determination...is the bourgeois ideological vision of neocapitalist *technocracy*, which is a social determination" (182).

Fekete's conclusion ('Struggle') attacks structuralism (in all of its forms) as the contemporary successor of the tradition. Again locating counterrevolution in the total

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suppression of praxis, Fekete (following Kosik, Sartre and others) criticizes the structuralist project as follows: "Attention is shifted away from the ways in which human beings have altered and do alter and may yet alter their objectifications; in consequence, structuralism finds nothing to investigate but order, the codes of order, reflections upon order, and the experience of order" (196).[15] Declaring that one is either a part of the problem or of the solution, Fekete ends with suggestions as to the possible revolutionary role of the intelligentsia and of theory. As alienated labor called on to maintain hegemonic domination, the intelligentsia must instead aid in exploding it: "This. . . is the task of all intellectual work: to articulate the possibilities of supersession and to illuminate and condemn domination in the given" (202). Unlike the tradition, which accepts or denies alienation in the present, we must posit a radically different future from which to criticize the present. Within this project, art, Fekete says, cannot solve the subject-object problem, but can "question the extent to which our world is human and tailored to our humanity. Criticism must make this question conscious as art makes it sensible" (201-202).

Throughout the book, Fekete opposes his view of art, artistic creation and critical reception to that of modern bourgeois critical theory. He speaks of genuine art as a "defetishized subject-object unity. . ." (14), and adds that "this is so because it makes sensible a defetishized world, a man-made world" (32), rejecting Richards' epistemological reduction of the subject-object unity in poetry. Art, formally perfect, is an individual and generic objectification, for the artist is said to appropriate "man's entirety" (22) in the act of creation. Further, genuine art "makes available a defetishized experience of our real world with the imperative to change our actual lives. . ." (120). This present-future oriented imperative, ignored by a static, present-past oriented criticism, is central to Fekete's definition of art. Following Lukács, he describes art's cathartic effect, which carries the ethical imperative, as "the shock to subjectivity in the confrontation of aesthetic immediacy with everyday immediacy. . ." (121).

Fekete's view is thus that art both is a defetishized subject-object unity and that it makes available a defetishized experience. The position that art is formally perfect, however, risks elevating artists (and perhaps critics) to the position of an avant-garde, for it makes of art a vision of the "end of history" before the fact. Art is rather a struggle toward defetishization, and this is true of both its moment of creation and its moment of reception. As such, it must contain an element of reification and an incomplete reconciliation of subjective imagination and objective materials. Indeed, one way in which it is a privileged realm in one-dimensional society is that it is allowed to be contradictory, to expose and explore contradictions. Thus, while we must reject the 'reconciliation of opposites' sought for by New Critics, paradox and irony, as categories, should not be summarily dismissed.

Several questions are raised by the fact that, except in the section on Symbolism,

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15. In his "Culture, History and Ambivalence: On Walter Benjamin," forthcoming in *Telos* 35 (Spring 1978), Fekete draws parallels between the assumptions of structuralism and those of Benjamin, particularly the de-centering of the subject, history as rupture and the reading of history as a collection of speech acts, a language to decode. Here, one of Fekete's main theses is that the retreat to a micrological defense of otherness may have been necessary in a one-dimensional society, but it is ineffective and obsolete when capitalism is restructured and needs artificially created non-identity: "The aphoristic fragments that once carried critical protest (Benjamin) today carry reconciliation (McLuhan)" (11). In this article, the periodization of one-dimensional society is primary.

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Fekete does not talk about specific works of art, but only of genuine art in the abstract. For example, it would be interesting to know whether or not a genuine work of art is objectively recognizable, and if so, how? If the cathartic effect is a criterion, does a given work produce the cathartic effect in all individuals? The assumption that the artist appropriates man's entirety would suggest that a genuine art work has or could have the same effect on everyone, and this suggestion is open to question. In an age of unprecedented specialization, when individual and especially group claims for liberation are so differentiated, it is hard to imagine what it would mean to appropriate and reveal man's entirety in any given work of art. In these probings, I do not wish to deny that art has a transhistorical component (as did the left against which the tradition reacted); I only wish to suggest that this component is perhaps more complex than Fekete's text indicates.

Other questions also emerge due to the fact that Fekete talks neither about specific works of art nor about the history of art in relation to New Criticism and its successors. The role of modern bourgeois critical theory in creating a literary canon in the universities is an important area for investigation in a study of neocapitalist ideology. Lennox has criticized Weimann for the same omission, noting that "New Criticism removed from the canon of university courses numerous works which deal realistically with social relationships, substituting for them works of great technical virtuosity."[16] The formal-technical relation to art demands or responds to not only certain aspects of a work of art but also a certain type of art. Perhaps we must face the historical possibility of the impoverishment of art itself. *At least,* we must question a canon chosen by an ideology adequate to neocapitalist rationalization. And in this regard, it might also be interesting to study the effect of the integration of the artist in academia.

Fekete's book is crucial for the left, which perhaps too often deals only with the theory of other members of the left, allowing dominant thought to go unchallenged. But Fekete's work is even more crucial for those who teach and use critical methods considered neutral, methods whose underlying assumptions are rarely if ever questioned, so 'natural' do they appear.[17] It is unfortunate, however, that a radical project such as Fekete's should be written in a forbidding prose which makes it unavailable to most of those who long for an alternative but will not be able to read the book. If the stage of one-dimensional society is behind us, so also should be the need for abstruse theoretical formulations.

Lynne Layton

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16. Sara Lennox, review of Robert Weimann, *"New Criticism" und die Entwicklung bürgerlicher Literaturwissenschaft*, in *New German Critique* 5, p. 175. See also Scott Sanders, "Towards a Social Theory of Literature," *Telos* 18 (Winter 1973-74), pp. 107-121. Sanders speaks of three differences between New Criticism and leftist criticism of the 1920s and 1930s: the focus on a different art (lyric poetry vs. social novel), use of a different medium (professional journals vs. journalism) and, of course, a different audience.

17. Is it a bad joke that Fekete's publishers have given the book a back cover, on which are advertised books by Richards, Frye, Hulme and McLuhan, all published by Routledge and Kegan Paul? Perhaps the publication of Fekete's book is proof that today the system needs opposition!

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Hans Magnus Enzensberger. *Mausoleum*. Translated by Joachim Neugroschel. New York: Urizen Books, 1976. 155 pages. $4.35 paper.

The fame of the German poet-essayist Hans Magnus Enzensberger is secure; it rests on widely differing interpretations of his work. From the very beginning of his literary career, there were those who saw in him a concerned critic of society and those who did not take him seriously; those who attacked him as a romantic Marxist and those who criticized him as an anarchistic conservative. All agreed however, that he is an exceptional literary talent who, at least in German-speaking countries, cannot be ignored.

For those who are interested in Enzensberger but do not read German, the situation is not too bad. Selections of poems and essays have been available for several years in America, including his famous essays on "Poetry and Politics," "The Industrialization of the Mind," in Enzensberger's own translation, "Commonplaces on the Newest Literature" and "Constituents of a Theory of the Media." A selection of essays from *Politik und Verbrechen* together with some others has been published under the title *Politics and Crime; Das Verhör von Habana* came out as *The Havana Inquiry* and the most recent one, *Mausoleum*, appeared in English one year after its publication in Germany.

The dull greyish-green covers of the German edition, without inscription, remind us of those volumes of poetry which lined our grandparents' shelves. This old-fashioned aspect visually confirms the title given to Enzensberger's "thirty-seven Ballads from the History of Progress:" *Mausoleum*. To it are consigned the lives of 37 men from throughout Western history, whose works still rule over our lives, even though they themselves are dead, with one exception: V.M.M.-Molotov, whose very name has been mummified, so to say, in his "contribution to progress."

The American edition of the poems misses not only this ironic tension displayed by the covers but many of the fine points of the text. Unnecessary and sometimes highly detrimental changes are introduced into the translation on almost every page.[1] Tenses are not preserved. Lines are capriciously broken up,[2] so that Enzensberger's clear and carefully constructed sentences lose both in clarity and meaning. Neugroschel does not try to rearrange the prose texts interspersed among the verse, and in these parts comes much closer to the original. On the whole one would wish he had followed more attentively in the path of Michael Hamburger, who has made some excellent translations of Enzensberger's early poetry.

Enzensberger characterizes his models only by their initials. Thus, the reader is forced to read carefully. If he or she has overcome the obstacles in form of quotes (printed in cursive), foreign words, parentheses, references, innuendos, etc. and would like to know who, for instance, is hiding behind "E.G. de la S." he has to consult the index of names which doubles for the table of contents. But even that is not so easy. He finds no listing for "S." nor "de la S."; finally, under "E.G. de la S." he finds a laconic "see Guevara."

1. In the first poem about the Italian clockmaker Giovanni de Dondi, Neugroschel translated "Uhr" with "timepiece;" "zwecklos und sinnreich" became "Purposeless, ingenious;" "Die Leute von Padua sahen nicht auf die Uhr. Ein Putsch folgte dem anderen." is translated: "The people of Padua didn't give the clock the time of the day. Putch upon putch." Why did he try to interpret cleverly where a literal translation would have been much easier and better? Numerous examples throughout the book could be given.

2. See quotations from the poems on Leibnitz and Fourier at the end of this review. In each case the lines of verse which are broken appeared unbroken in the original German.

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Besides the 37 personages populating the *Mausoleum*, all of which belong, not accidentally, to the white race and the male sex, one finds many others in the index who are mentioned, quoted, or considered. Next to the names are page numbers supposedly indicating their location in the text. But that only adds to the confusion, because quotations and allusions are not identified by footnotes.

This riddle-solving certainly renders more difficult "the ritual of going through, classifying and interpreting poetry" against which Enzensberger has so vehemently spoken out in a lecture called "Modest Suggestions for Protecting the Young from the Products of Poetry."[3] Yet he must be aware that as long as he continues to write poetry it will be subject to analysis, and that the very opacity of *Mausoleum* invites us to "interpret" and "classify" his earlier works particularly in order to shed more light on his most recent book.

One might summarize *Mausoleum*'s relationship to Enzensberger's development and earlier work in three points:

1. We find in *Mausoleum* the pessimism that pervaded his earlier poetry. If *Mausoleum* is a "synthesis" of his literary works,[4] it is a synthesis that leads to no further dialectic development. It presents a picture of an irrevocable downhill process in history.
2. In the context of Enzensberger's literary theoretical statements, *Mausoleum* represents a further instance of the inconstancy that has been a recurrent trait in his work as poet, essayist, critic, playwright and novelist. After 1968, Enzensberger has repeatedly stated that literature, especially poetry, has no considerable effect on readers in terms of political education. He has instead expressed a belief in public enlightenment through media and, when the written word is used, in documentary reports. Through the *Kursbuch* he had hoped to contribute to this kind of *Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit*. *Mausoleum* indicates a shift away from such preoccupations.
3. At first glance, *Mausoleum* does not fit into the political views expressed in earlier essays. Participation in the student movement had led him away from Adorno's theory of total manipulation and consequent resignation. With the dissolution of this movement, however, Enzensberger's stance shifted again, and it appears that his statements at any point reflect more the political atmosphere he is writing in than a firm theoretical basis. In this sense, *Mausoleum* is consistent with an attitude that Enzensberger has manifested all along.

These three points may be clarified by a brief survey of Enzensberger's works.

After writing a dissertation in 1955 on Clemens Brentano, the methodology of which indicated no political awareness, Enzensberger published his first volume of poetry, *verteidigung der wölfe* (*defense of the wolves*, 1957), a political statement on the times and on his own situation in the context of political decisions made by the West German government. On July 7, 1956 the *Bundestag*, against the vote of the Social Democratic Party, had decided to reintroduce compulsory military service, which meant that anti-fascists, old-liberals, intellectuals and pacifists were consolidated into an opposition movement. With manifestos and protesting statements they tried to mobilize the public against the Adenauer government, but in vain. In August 1956, the German Communist Party was prohibited by a supreme court ruling. In April 1957, the chancellor stated publicly that the threat from the East made it necessary to equip the German army with atomic weapons. An international campaign against atomic armament ensued, in which Enzensberger's pen was active. His first volume of poetry

3. "Bescheidener Vorschlag zum Schutze der Jugend vor der Erzeugnissen der Poesie" in *The German Quarterly* (published by the AATG, Appleton, Wisc.) No. 4, Nov. 1976.
4. Theo Buck, "Enzensberger und Brecht," in *Text und Kritik* 49 (München, 1976), p. 14.

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verteidigung der wölfe belonged to this "Oeffentlichkeitsarbeit" (public enlightenment).

It was through poetry that he sought to rouse the critical potential of the reader. In his search for new possibilities, Enzensberger wavered between unrealistic utopian ideas and a pessimism dictated by reality:

wherever we play
an olive grove
a rich fishing-ground
a bay of silverish ooze
a clearing full of moss
a hill with wild cherries

no pneumatic hammer: a gentle bow

no battleship: a light gavotte [5]

This poem belongs to the "friendly poems;" there are also "sad" and "angry poems" in this book, all connected by a pessimistic outlook. The "friendly poems" still suggest hope in the form of untouched nature; here the poet places himself (as "I" or "we") in the utopia. The "angry poems," however are addressed to a public to which the author does not belong. He distances himself from those who do not fight against the ugly reality by accusing, provoking and attacking them:

you lambs, why crows would be
nuns stacked up against you:
all of you hoodwink each other.
fraternity's the rule
among wolves:
they travel in packs.

blessed are the thieves: you
ask them up for a rape, then
throw yourself down on the mouldy bed
of submission, moaning
you stick to your lies. you'd love
to be torn limb from limb. you
won't change the world. [6]

The provocative tone suddenly shifts at the end of this poem to one of resignation. Only the poet is aware of the miserable conditions we live in; he cannot offer any change, only admonitions. Of course, he would rather be where the world is still pure, but his moral conscience forces him to remain. Thus, in "instructions for sisyphus," he writes:

what you do, is prospectless. good:
you have understood that, admit it,
but do not resign yourself
man with the stone. no one
thanks you; chalk strokes,

5. Enzensberger, *verteidigung der wölfe*, (Frankfurt a.M., 1957), p. 8.
6. Translated by Jerome Rothenberg, in *poems for people who don't read poems* (New York, 1968), p. 23.

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the rain licks them up listlessly,
mark out death. Do not rejoice
too early, the prospectless
is not a career. . . .

be silent,
speak a word with the sun,
while the stone rolls, but
take no comfort in your impotence,
but rather increase by a centner
the wrath in the world, by a grain.
there is a shortage of men,
doing the prospectless mutely,
tearing out like grass hope,
their laughter, the future, rolling,
rolling their wrath up the mountains.[7]

A second volume of poetry *landessprache* (*language of the country,* 1959) continues in the vein of the "angry poems," but the tone has become more aggressive, and the pessimism is now weighted with pathos. The social problems appear to stagnate, the bad conditions seem unchangeable:

let go! ditch it! from this i know nothing
i'm not one of us i'm not one of anyone
keep off with your hands i'm alone let go
i don't want to change you god help you
it leaves me cold it's really too mad

o brothers in foam o prelates o eaters of fire
o boards of directors sprung from the waves i'm watching
you[8]

Many critics have pointed out that Enzensberger's early poetry has to be interpreted in connection with Gottfried Benn's aesthetics. This is certainly true of the formal aspects Enzensberger's poems. Without admitting it, he learned from Benn something which after much delay became apparent to West German poets at the beginning of the fifties: "A poem does not come into being, a poem is made."[9] It was possible to separate elements of Benn's aesthetics from the irrational aspects of his theory and from its thesis that art has no social function, so that poets of the young generation could celebrate Benn even during his lifetime as the "artist, who had freed lyric poetry from the misunderstanding that it should have to express anything but itself."[10] Enzensberger was not among these: at first he did not pay any attention to Benn, then he wrote a reply to Benn's aesthetics ("Scherenschleifer und Poeten," 1961), attacking mainly the concept of the "absolute poem," and finally, in 1962, when the currents of criticism had made it opportune to oppose Benn, Enzensberger gave vent to his acerbity: "Thoughts were never his strong side...philosophy as scrambled eggs...bloatingly thought and

7. *verteidigung der wölfe,* p. 70. Trans. by Paul Leu.
8. From "foam," trans. by Rothenberg, in *poems for people who don't read poems, op. cit.,* p. 127.
9. Gottfried Benn, *Probleme der Lyrik,* (Wiesbaden, 1951), p. 6.
10. Peter Uwe Hohendahl, *Wirkung wider Willen,* (Frankfurt, 1971), p. 82.

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muddily formulated...The grammar is dubious, the theory fourth-hand, scraps of culture, intelligence that reaches no further than the betrayal of intelligence to force."[11] The fact that Benn had sympathized with the Nazis made him anathema and his name had to be severed from even those theoretical positions commensurable to Enzensberger's own. The few Benn poems to which he paid any attention were, significantly, written long before 1933. They are included in Enzensberger's anthology of modern poetry, *Museum der modernen Poesie*, (1960).

In 1964, Enzensberger published a third book of poetry *blindenschrift* (*braille*). Compared to the earlier poems the tone has become calmer, the voice softer, and the situation more hopeless. Political conditions only provide the point of departure for rumination of his own unpromising position.

when i wake up
the house is silent.
only the birds make a noise.
through the window i see
no one. here
no road passes.
there is no wire in the sky
and no wire in the earth.
quiet the living things lie
under the axe.

i put water on to boil.
i cut my bread.
unquiet i press
the red push-button
of the small transistor.

"caribbean crisis...washes whiter
and whiter and whiter...troops ready to fly out...
phase three...that's the way i love you...
amalgamated steel stocks are back to par..."

i do not take the axe.
i do not smash the gadget to pieces.
the voice of terror
calms me; it says:
we are still alive.

the house is silent.
i do not know how to set traps
or make an axe out of flint,
when the last blade
has rusted.[12]

In a world without hope, one can nevertheless make one's nest in the hopelessness itself. This Enzensberger does, with words, cultivating a dialectic of words where the dialectic

11. Enzensberger, review on Benn's *Autobiographische und vermischte Schriften* in *Der Spiegel* 23 (Hamburg, 1962).

12. "remote house," trans. by Michael Hamburger, in *poems for people*.. p. 29.

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of thoughts seems to find no issue:
impatiently
in the name of the contented
to despair

patiently
in the name of the despairing
to despair of the despair

impatiently patiently
in the name of the unconvincible ones
to convince [13]

The numerous essays, books and reviews that appeared alongside the poems show that Enzensberger was not less agile with thoughts than with words. There are stands on politics and science, commentaries on Ernst Bloch and Cesar Vallejo, on nursery rhymes, on the language of the *Spiegel* (which was even printed in *Der Spiegel*), on all aspects of literary life, on the "combinatory system of plant life." The critic Christian Linder described him as "someone who is always mixing and then pulling out to dress up for something new... Anything and everything is addressed and expressed and then abandoned, yet without shutting out the possibility of returning to it..." [14] An example is Enzensberger's pronouncement on literary theory.

Around 1960, his literary-theoretical stance showed a strong affinity to Adorno's conception of modern art: the essays "Poesie und Politik" and "Bewusstseins-Industrie" explicitly link with Adorno's "Rede über Lyrik und Gesellschaft" and "Kulturindustrie." Sentence for sentence, "Poesie und Politik" appears to be modeled on his teacher's line of thought in "Rede über Lyrik und Gesellschaft:" "The objective social content of poetry... can be found only in the language of poetry." [15] "Its [poetry's] political mission is to refuse any political mission and to continue to speak for everyone about things of which no one speaks..." (p. 81). "Poetry is anticipating even if it takes the form of doubt, rejection, or negation" (p. 82). Enzensberger takes over a concept of praxis that rests not upon the direct intervention in social conditions but binds revolutionary processes to theory. Here the agreement with Adorno reaches its limit. Enzensberger does not follow him to the pessimism of the *Kulturindustrie. Bewusstseins-Industrie* for Enzensberger is not total manipulation, its contradictions contain the possibility of change and ultimately destruction. In "Bewusstseins-Industrie," the critical potential is not ascribed to poetry but to acting subjects, the intellectuals.

While Enzensberger was engaging in discussions with Adorno in these and other essays, he was at the same time making statements on literary theory akin to those of Brecht. He subsumed his early poetry under a Brechtian conception, characterizing poems as *Gebrauchsgegenstände*, later as means of production whose function is to produce truth. The accent seemed to shift from Brecht to Adorno and back to Brecht. What the two had in common—the dialectical conception of society and art, and its critical thrust toward truth—Enzensberger took over without difficulty; but he evaded the political ideological implication of their theories, which with Brecht was the

13. "schwierige arbeit für theodor w. adorno," in *blindenschrift*. (Frankfurt a.M., 1971), p. 59.
14. "Der lange Sommer der Romantik," in *Literaturmagazin* 4 (Hamburg, 1975), p. 92.
15. Translated in *The Consciousness Industry* (New York, 1974), p. 77.

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implementation of socialism and with Adorno was ultimately passivity and resignation.

There were signs in the mid-sixties that Enzensberger was trying to find his own path between Benn, Brecht and Adorno. He moved from an island in the Oslo-Fjord to West Berlin, stopped writing poems, and published the first *Kursbuch* (1965).

The emphasis in his magazine is on political enlightenment by means of reports, discussions, essays and documents. The part of contemporary poetry and fiction is limited, since "our literary consciousness is limited; it ignores large areas of civilizing realities."[16] The general skepticism regarding the effectiveness of literature was accompanied by a more precise analysis of the social situation in capitalist and communist states and of the "European periphery."

The turn away from the non-conformism of the fifties toward politicization was not a unique phenomenon but rather a widespread tendency among West German intellectuals. The objective possibilities for breaking out of the isolation had been created by the Free University of Berlin, where a protest movement against the university structure and social conditions had gathered momentum since 1958 and had reached beyond the confines of the academy. The initial impulse had been the plans to provide the army with atomic weapons; the Vietnam war, the "grand coalition" of social democrats and Christian democrats (SPD and CDU, 1966), the *Notstandsgesetze* (emergency power laws) and repressive measures taken within the university drove the movement forward.

After moving to West Berlin in 1965, Enzensberger not only was able to observe these events at first hand, but actively participated in them through his *Kursbuch*. Engagement for him, however, unlike for many others writers, meant not attachment to a political party, but rather radical criticism of all systems: "... the moral rearmament from the left can leave me out. I am no idealist. I prefer arguments to confessions, doubt to sentiments. I loath revolutionary babble. I have no use for world views free of contradictions. In dubious cases it is reality that decides."[17]

It has been repeatedly pointed out that Enzensberger's contribution to the so-called "political alphabetization" of society has only multiplied the contradictions instead of making them transparent. In 1967, for instance, he accepted a fellowship from the Center for Advanced Studies of Wesleyan University in Connecticut. He went to the U.S., stayed several months, then decided to return the stipend with a public letter addressed to the president of the university. In this letter he essentially repeated what Horkheimer and Adorno had said in the early forties: that the situation in the United States was in many respects reminiscent of Germany in the thirties; only the methods of repression were more subtle in America and appeared harmless from the outside. He ended by saying that he would go to Cuba, since he had the impression that he could be of more use to the Cubans than to Wesleyan University and that he had more to learn from them. He did not, however, proceed immediately to Cuba but went to Australia, because there too he had been offered a fellowship. Some months later, when the student movement in Germany was at its height, he did go to Cuba but left soon afterward. This kind of paradox pervades his life and his political views.

From the start, his aim in the *Kursbuch* was to analyze social delusions and class constraints through confrontation with objective facts. Since 1965 literature had been at a standstill; so it was not astonishing that Enzensberger should take part in the

16. "Ankündigung einer neuen Zeitschrift," in *Kursbuch* 1, (Frankfurt a.M., 1965).

17. "Peter Weiss und andere" in *Kursbuch* 6, 1966, p. 176.

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pronouncement of the death of bourgeois literature in 1968. In the famous essay in *Kursbuch* 15, "Gemeinplätze, die neuste Literatur betreffend" ("Commonplaces on the Newest Literature"), he says casually and with a touch of irony: "Literary works cannot be assigned an essential social function under present conditions... Their claim to be enlightening, their utopian surplus, their critical potential has shriveled to mere appearance."[18] This has been wrongly interpreted as marking a turning point in his writing, but is actually the final consequence of the attitude that had already been hinted at in "Bewusstseins-Industrie" (1962) and the opening announcement of the *Kursbuch*. In the last paragraph of the "Gemeinplätze" he pleads for political publicizing such as that of Günther Wallraff's report from German factories, which, among others, he considered effective in the "political alphabetization" of Germany.

Enzensberger's ironic tone is appropriate, since his criticism of traditional literature—that it is innocuous because its authors hold fast to the old forms of individual authorship, to the distribution limits of the market, and to the separation of theoretical and practical work—applies with equal force to his own work. Had he really been serious with his suggestions, he would have had to discontinue his own production, for there is, in the literature of the left, no greater contrast than that between Enzensberger, the individualist, who values the outstanding and the original and Wallraff who steps back to let others be heard.

Enzensberger did not of course stop writing, he even published another volume of poems in 1971. This contradicted his own conception of political work, but then, as he later admitted, he did not want to kill off literature, he only wanted to certify its uselessness. And that, as he noted in the "Gemeinplätze," many had done before him.

Among those who influenced Enzensberger the most was Walter Benjamin, whose radical critique of traditional bourgeois art was further developed in Enzensberger's essay "Baukasten zu einer Theorie der Medien," ("Constituents of a Theory of the Media," 1970). In 1970 he applied to all media what Benjamin, at the stage of technical development in the thirties, could say mainly about the film: "The open secret of the electronic media, the decisive political factor, which has been waiting, suppressed or crippled, for its moment to come, is their mobilizing power."[19] In answer to the New Left's opposition to media, Enzensberger sketched a theory according to which emancipatory forces derive from highly developed technology, from its assumptions of collective production and collective reception. Like Benjamin he fell back upon an enthusiasm over technology which was lacking in critical perspective. By dissolving the fundamental tenets of traditional literature, namely its fictional character and its individual production, Enzensberger stated that the electronic media have superseded literature in all its forms. For the author, who strategically has to work as the agent of the masses, it follows "that he must see it as his goal to make himself redundant as a specialist in much the same way as a teacher of literacy only fulfills his task when he is no longer necessary."[20]

Enzensberger himself helped in the demolition of traditional aesthetics with two so-called documentary works (a term he does not use) written for film and television. *Das Verhör von Habana* (*The Havana Inquiry*, 1970), is the reconstruction of a public interrogation in April 1961 of CIA mercenaries involved in the Bay of Pigs. The statements of the defeated counterrevolutionaries were broadcast over television and radio. Enzensberger's version, an arrangement of ten testimonies, not only aims at the

18. *The Consciousness Industry*, p. 96.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 128.
20. *Ibid.*

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reconstruction of historical facts and sequences but at their underlying principles. Starting from the counterrevolutionaries' social motivations he reveals the domination mechanisms of the bourgeoisie, leaving his views on socialist alternatives unspoken.

Two years later, in the novel *Der kurze Sommer der Anarchie* (*The Short Summer of Anarchy*, 1972) the author's political position has become less clear. The book reports on the life and death of the Spanish anarchist leader, Buenaventura Durruti. For months, Enzensberger traveled through Europe to uncover Durruti's traces in statements from his friends, relatives and fellow combatants. These testimonies, interrupted by the author's annotations, were fitted together into Durruti's life-story, first in the form of a movie, then as a novel.

Enzensberger says at the beginning of this novel: "History is an invention for which reality supplies the material. But it is not just any invention. The interest it arouses is based upon the interests of those who tell it; and it allows those who listen to recognize and determine more precisely their own interest as well as their enemies'. Scientific scholarship that imagines itself to be value-free has given us a great deal; but it remains a Schlemihl, a fictional figure. Only the true subject of history casts a shadow. It casts it forward as a collective fiction."[21] Enzensberger's class standpoint is relativized by the opening assumption (history as invention) and by a strong subjective coloring. Only when he sees a subject acting in it does he seem to be interested in historic phenomena. Here it is the revolutionary Durruti, for whom Spanish anarchism provides a colorful background; a later publication *Der Weg ins Freie* (*Road to Freedom*, 1975) describes slaves, servants and prisoners struggling against social and political fetters; in *Mausoleum* the contributors to western civilization are the historical subject and in his earlier poetry it was Enzensberger himself.

To forstall interpretations which could connect the utopian *Short Summer of Anarchy* with his own concept of revolution, he closes the novel with: "But what is past is past. One does not make the same revolution twice" (p. 293).

"Berliner Gemeinplätze" ("Berlin Commonplaces"), two pamphlet-like essays published in 1968 in his *Kursbuch* shed more light on his political views. In the style of Adorno's *Minima Moralia*, he drew 38 conclusions out of West Germany's post-war history. The aphoristic structure allowed him to limit his perspective to hints and remarks. Germany in 1945, according to Enzensberger, had missed the unique chance of a revolution that would have been bloodless and not imposed by force. Twenty years later, the question of a revolutionary future for technically highly developed industrial states could no longer find answers in history. China and the USSR are no proof for Enzensberger. With a view toward the Third World, he leaves the possibility of a revolutionary future open but not negated, since "the capability of the capitalist social system to integrate its opponents from within and without is limited."[22]

Who under these circumstances could be the revolutionary subject? Neither the students nor the intellectuals but, as in all past revolutions, the "dependent masses" which can be mobilized by minorities. In 1968 Enzensberger was sure that the parliamentary way was an illusion; without revolution, socialism cannot be realized. If and how the revolution will take place is uncertain for him. Neither the communist parties of the east nor those of the western states offer him a revolutionary perspective. Who then is left for revolution? Enzensberger's commentary: "In revolutionary matters

21. *Der kurze Sommer der Anarchie*, (Frankfurt a.M., 1972), p. 13.
22. *Kursbuch* 11, 1968, p. 162.

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every one is an expert" (p. 168) and in the end there remains only the proverb-like "Truth is revolutionary" (p. 197).

During the anti-authoritarian phase of the student movement, its critical progressive forces could not only swallow Enzensberger's loosely argued political statements but saw in them a reflection of their own theoretical openness. When the movement fragmented into groups which became tightly organized and dogmatically rigid, there was no place left for Enzensberger's somewhat superficial if brilliant theorizing. He did not join any of those groups, nor did he support any of the left-wing political parties. Now, he sympathizes with Italian communism but the above comments show that he does not expect much from that side either. Or did he mean the "Berliner Gemeinplätze" not entirely in earnest? Is he more concerned with a literary representation of revolution rather than changes in society? Yet, he withdrew the successful *Kursbuch* from Suhrkamp Press, handed over the means of production and the profits to the producers and published the annual balance.

In 1975 he gave up the publication of the magazine and in the same year published *Mausoleum*; this once again did not correspond to what he had said about "political alphabetization" and poetry a few years before in an interview with *Weimarer Beiträge*:" . . . the fact that something is a poem disqualifies it in a way from having political effect. . . Of course, I could publish a volume of poetry every two years. I know, so to say, how it works. I can do it. But that is bad. One has rather to seek out things one still cannot do and which one has to learn. I also see this as the only possibility to get away from self-repetition."[23]

This Enzensberger said just after the successful performance of *The Havana Inquiry*, when the end of the student movement was not yet in sight. After that the political climate of West Germany changed drastically; the movement against the system, which had swept along hundreds of thousands of young Germans, was systematically crushed by the limitations of civil rights, *Berufsverbot*, and the witch hunt for presumptive enemies of the state.

In this context it is easy to interpret giving up the *Kursbuch* and publishing *Mausoleum* as a kind of resignation, especially when the historical pessimism of the early poems comes out clearly again in these ballads. The common denominator of the 37 lives is their part in that anonymous process which had been characterized aptly as "progress of horror."

At the beginning of the book is the invention of a clock, from there on time flows before our eyes: Gutenberg with the invention of the printing press, a nodal point of progress made by others in mining and milling, in metallurgy and weaponry; Macchiavelli, whose lies, alas, speak the truth; Campanella, who wanted to better mankind—by eliminating the family and private property—through beating and the death penalty. The doubt cast on Leibniz's theory and life is presented in the form of CIA files. His contribution to progress does not seem to justify the horror; therefore Enzensberger adds annotations regarding his private life which do:

> Private life: none. Sexual interests: negative. Emotionally,
> L. is a moron. His relations to others are discourse
> and nothing else. Furthermore, the thing that drives you crazy
> is that insane diligence. . . (p. 25)

23. *Weimarer Beiträge* 5 (Berlin, Weimar, 1971), p. 90.

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There is Vaucauson who introduced the automative spinning machine and thereby the assembly line, and Evans, who got rid of the miller with his automative mill. Finally Fourier, " 'No critic of society,' he was its foe" (p. 68). No grounds for hope, however; the ironic tone already implies a miscarriage:

> ... Im-
> agine:
> inflexible and silent like Bartleby, with open eyes,
> or like Pécuchet at his desk, proud and immodest,
> he'll be found
> by the concierge one morning, under the leaves,
> dead,
> kneeling, on the fifth floor, on Rue Jean-Jacques
> Rousseau,
> between potted plants, in a stupefying green smell
> of spent seed. (p. 72)

By constructing his portraits from a mixture of private and public activity, judgements of contemporaries and of succeeding generations, he presents these people out of the past to the reader as if they were close personal associates.

The prominent figures of the proletarian revolution are not portrayed; they are referred to by innuendo, often sharp and sarcastic, and this is indeed often the tone throughout the volume. With Bakunin, however, the ironic distance closes. In the conflict of the lines "Bakunin, stay where you are" and "Bakunin, come back," are expressed Enzensberger's doubts, wishes and longings concerning social change.

Toward the end there is also Cerletti, inventor of the electric shock, whose experiments cannot be contained in a poetic structure. The author lets Cerletti report in prose in the first person. The last portrait is that of Guevara, whose name conjures up a time that is not far in the past yet already forgotten.

In their structure, these poems differ fundamentally from the earlier ones in that here the author appears largely as an arranger of existing material. What is arranged and juxtaposed and framed is no longer his own conflicts but other people's, much as in the *Havana Inquiry* and the Durruti story. This structural transformation was not able, however, to break through "the elitist form and the monologic character" which Enzensberger had ascribed to poetry in the interview with *Weimarer Beiträge* (p. 88); on the contrary, the difficulties for the reader mentioned at the beginning of this review underscore these characteristics.

He has not succeeded in getting away from self-repetition—something that did not hurt his sales. *Mausoleum* was on the best-seller list, a rare achievement for a volume of poetry. This was at least partly due to the book's publication, once again, at the right moment. Between the *Road to Freedom* (which appeared simultaneously) and this chilling journey along the road into the "totally administered society," the public in the repressive climate of West Germany chose the latter.

Ingrid Eggers

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Vernon Richards. *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution.* London: Freedom Press, 1972.

Sam Dolgoff, ed. *The Anarchist Collectives. Workers' Self-Management in the Spanish Revolution 1936-1939.* New York: Free Life Editions, 1974.

Murray Bookchin. *The Spanish Anarchists: The Heroic Years 1868-1936.* New York: Free Life Editions, 1977.

Since Noam Chomsky's "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship" (in *American Power and the New Mandarins*, 1969), there has been a flood of books in English on the Spanish anarchists. Along with such scholarly works as Temma Kaplan's *Anarchists of Andalusia, 1868-1903* (1977), there have been a number of long-overdue translations—for example, José Peirats and Gaston Leval, both anarchist participants in the Spanish revolution: *Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution* (Peirats) and *Collectives in the Spanish Revolution* (Leval). Also recently translated are biographical studies of renowned anarchist guerillas: Abel Paz, *Durruti: The People Armed*, and Antonio Tellez, *Sabate: Guerilla Extraordinary.* (The last four books are all available at anarchist bookstores; try Ammunition Books, 4403 Second Avenue, Detroit, MI 48201). The Paz and Tellez books should help discredit the biased accounts of anarchist guerrillas by E.J. Hobsbawm. In 1969, MIT Press published a translation of the most reliable history of the Civil War by Pierre Broué and Emile Temime, *The Revolution and Civil War in Spain.* At last there is hope the Spanish revolution and civil war can be evaluated on a basis other than mythical.

Myths, however, die hard, and I want to go over some of the most notorious ones. The major tendency in Spanish anarchism was *not* rural, nor was it a millenarian, quasi-religious movement. By 1936, the overwhelming majority of members in the C.N.T. (the anarchosyndicalist union) were industrial workers from Catalonia and Saragossa. A millenarian kind of anarchism existed in some parts of Andalusia around 1900, but was hardly dominant. Furthermore, rural anarchism was profoundly committed to enlightenment and education, especially proud of the Ferrer-type free schools they created for their children. One must keep in mind, however, that of "Spain's 25 million inhabitants in 1936, 68 percent lived in rural areas, while 70 percent of its total industry was concentrated in the small province of Catalonia."[1] And Catalonia, of course, was an anarchist stronghold. But the industrial proletariat was deeply affected by rural forms of thinking and feeling. As Bookchin emphasizes, Spain's proletariat was not hereditary and disciplined, like most of Europe's by the end of the 19th century, but was still close enough to the former *pueblo* life to despise industrial, urban regimentation. The Barcelona anarchosyndicalist worker of 1936 was much closer to the English worker of the early nineteenth century, than to the contemporary European worker, who no longer questioned industrialism.

Nor can Spanish anarchism be equated with church-burnings and mindless violence. For one thing, anarchists did not have a monopoly on violent anti-clericalism, which was more of a general Spanish tendency than something specifically anarchist; in fact, the most concerted effort to burn churches was undertaken by the bourgeois Radicals, not the anarchists. Anarchist violence in general has been greatly exaggerated. Nevertheless, the bloodiest battles before the Civil War were between the *pistoleros* of the C.N.T. and the Catalonian factory owners. Although the toll in human lives was tragically high, one has to agree with Bookchin that the C.N.T. had no alternative but to answer violence with violence. There were some serious problems with the

1. Vernon Richards, *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution*, p. 98.

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philosophy and practice of "propaganda by the deed," but I do not think a fair-minded observer would find the Spanish anarchists unusually violent, given the situation they found themselves in.

The Spanish anarchists, far from trying to sabotage the anti-fascist war headed by the Popular Front government, cooperated naively with their political enemies; in the end, they were attacked more ferociously by the Popular Front police and Communist troops than by Franco's army. Going against all anarchist principles, the F.A.I. (an association of anarchist affinity groups designed principally to combat reformist tendencies in the C.N.T.) agreed to participate in the Popular Front government, in the name of unity and anti-fascist solidarity, which the anarchists lived up to more than anyone else (see, for example, Orwell's account of the "May days," 1937, in *Homage to Catalonia*).

The Popular Front, in fact, sabotaged the war effort by suppressing the social revolution. After the Popular Front electoral victory in 1936, the police force was increased to 40,000 in Loyalist Spain alone, compared to the 15,600 police in all of Spain when the right wing ruled. The police, used principally to attack anarchists and other political unreliables, possessed more and better weapons than the anarchist militias at the Aragon front. Communist troops attacked anarchist rural collectives, even at harvest time, risking famine for the sake of counterrevolution. C.N.T.-managed industries were deprived of raw materials and capital by the Popular Front, which eventually destroyed workers' control and along with it, the solidarity and enthusiasm of many workers. Anarchist militias, famous for their battlefield success, were turned into military units, with hierarchical organization, thus destroying their effectiveness. The Popular Front was so fearful of workers' control that it deprived the Catalonian munitions industry of much-needed coal simply to undermine self-management. One of the few accurate statements Trotsky made on the Spanish civil war was that the " 'republican' military commanders occupied themselves more with crushing the social revolution than with winning military victories."[2] Gaston Leval, a survivor of the civil war, concludes: "Carefully weighing every word, I am convinced that if half the intelligence used to combat the Revolution had been turned against Franco, the *Caudillo* would never have triumphed."[3]

The social revolution, promoted and carried out by the anarchists (and some rank and file Socialists, against the wishes of their Party), did not create any insuperable obstacles to the successful prosecution of the anti-fascist war. In fact, as the social revolution went, so went the chances for defeating Franco. After the Popular Front had attacked the rural collectives, destroyed the anarchist militias, wrecked workers' self-management, and violently persecuted individual anarchists, it had achieved an empty victory; although it controlled the Spanish forces, those forces were radically demoralized and hardly reliable. One of Vernon Richards' major points is that in 1936, the people armed in voluntary militias beat back Franco's attack, but the "people's army," centralized and bureaucratized, lost the war. The rural collectives increased production in most instances, while the industrial collectives

2. Leon Trotsky, "Spain: The Civil War," in Isaac Deutscher, ed., *The Age of Permanent Revolution: A Trotsky Anthology* (New York, 1964), pp. 192-195. Although the POUM was an anti-Stalinist Marxist party, it was not Trotskyist, as Trotsky's description of them as "helpless centrists" would indicate (p. 195). Trotsky's own analysis was similar to the anarchists' in that he realized an anti-fascist war, unless coupled with social revolution, was doomed to failure in Spain. But "social revolution" meant different things to the anarchists and statist, centralist Trotsky.

3. Quoted in Sam Dolgoff, ed., *The Anarchist Collectives*, p. 58.

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produced far more efficiently than during capitalist ownership; proving this with documentation is the great achievement of Dolgoff's anthology. A Stalinist argument was that social revolution had to wait because it would alienate the bourgeois democracies, whose aid was necessary for winning the war. In fact, however, no aid was forthcoming, revolution or not, and it is debatable whether Franco could have been beaten only with foreign assistance. About all the Russian "aid" accomplished was Spain's losing 500 tons of gold which found its way to Moscow. The Stalinist argument makes sense only in relation to Russian foreign policy, which wanted foreign allies to protect it against Nazi Germany. One will never know whether an isolated Spanish revolution could have survived, because it was destroyed by the Left before the Right even had a chance to do it.

The conflict between the anarchists and other leftists was not simply a sectarian power struggle, but was rooted in fundamental philosophical differences. The anarchists had basic assumptions that distinguished them from other proponents of socialism. One assumption is that the materials for liberation are already at hand, ready to be utilized, existing potentially. *Comunismo libertario* was not a distant goal for which one stoically waited until the historical moment was "ripe" for action; it was, rather, an ever present possibility that one was trying to create and for which one had to be prepared. The anarchists' commitment to scientific enlightenment and technological improvement displays an implicit awareness of historical evolution, but their interpretation of history could not have been more unMarxian.[4] Revolution was something that made sense immediately, personally, in one's daily life. The *obrera consciente* who lived according to the Idea fought against authoritarianism in a variety of ways. In place of official marriages, there were "free unions"; one one abstained from the luxuries of the bourgeoisie and avoided drunkenness; mutual aid, not competition, was practiced in the affinity group and local syndicate; scientific education supplanted Catholic propaganda; and the idealism was so fierce and vital that, as Bookchin documents, strikes for "social reasons" were more popular than economic strikes (so much for Lenin's idea that workers, without the guidance of a vanguard party, were capable of nothing higher than trade union consciousness). To free a comrade from jail was considered more noble than increasing one's wages.

The anarchists, ever since 1868, had been creating a libertarian culture, not just a political ideology, a way of life, not simply a set of beliefs. It is worth noting that the anarchists were the only group that promoted the collectives and could account for them theoretically. All the other "socialists" opposed the collectives, sometimes with violence, always with the insistence that social revolution was historically premature. Even the brave members of the P.O.U.M., who were persecuted by the Stalinists as vigorously as the anarchists were, rejected the collectives on the Marxist grounds that the moment was not yet ripe for them. Gaston Leval saw a number of P.O.U.M. pamphlets denouncing the collectives in Aragon, where, by the way, collectivization was greatest in all of Spain. There is an undeniable fact that has to be embarrassing to Marxists of all persuasions: not a single Marxist group supported, much less gave

4. I disagree with Bookchin's emphasis on the scarcity-post-scarcity dichotomy, as though scarcity were inimical to anarchism; certainly the Spanish anarchists did not think so. Although I agree that anarchosyndicalism was a distinct, historical phase, and that contemporary anarchism must avoid a close imitation of the Spanish model, libertarian kinds of relationships do not depend on the precondition of material abundance; selfishness and social irresponsibility are just as likely in a post-scarcity situation.

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leadership to, one of the most astounding social revolutions in history. The anarchists were too busy making the collectives work to worry about the "historical moment," an empty Hegelian fiction if there ever was one.

Indeed, the Hegelian tradition, even revised and rehabilitated by the Frankfurt School, is irrelevant to anarchism and the social revolution it promotes. Anarchism finds its philosophical articulation in the critique of Hegel, from Stirner to Camus. The project to rescue subjectivity from the dominating totalities of Hegelian "History" and "Ideas" can and should be linked to the attempt by anarchists to perform an analogous "rescue" in the political realm. Although the Frankfurt School goes as far as one can go in a libertarian direction within an Hegelian-Marxist framework, it falls short of anarchism's primary commitments to the individual, the immediacy of experience, and the validity of feelings.

Another anarchist assumption is that the only viable forms of social organization are decentralist. When the C.N.T. had over a million members, there was *one* paid official! The typical organizational form was the affinity group, in which the members enjoyed fierce personal loyalty, lasting friendship, and of course immediate control over political decisions. Strategy would be worked out in discussion, face to face encounters, with the aim at unanimous consent, not parliamentary victories. *Ultimate* control rested with the affinity group or local syndicate, not a centralized authority. No matter what kind of juggling Marxist-Leninists do with the concept of "democratic centralism," ultimately centralism wins out over democracy. Lenin found it necessary to suppress all political dissent within the Bolshevik Party after Kronstadt, and Mao had to pull in the reins during the Cultural Revolution when the revolutionaries took too seriously the notion of decentralist democracy. Although Marxists have gone very far in a libertarian direction at times, they have always reasserted their commitment to centralist control when a crisis threatened their assumptions. Marxism has always mediated freedom through political control, so that no matter how democratic it tries to be, its ultimate allegiance is to the political party and the state. Anarchism, on the other hand, has frankly admitted the dangers of bureaucracy and has vigilantly struggled against them, in their own organizations as well as others'. Although the anarchists voted in the 1936 election and later entered the Popular Front Government, these were extraordinary departures from anarchist principles, perhaps justifiable as lesser evils; nevertheless, the anarchists never had hope of promoting *comunismo libertario* by using the state machinery. For the anarchists, the F.A.I., C.N.T., and collectives were primary organizations, not vehicles for acquiring control of the government. Both the Socialists, through the U.G.T. (the Socialist-led union), the Communists, through Russian aid, and even the P.O.U.M., operated on the political assumptions of party control: the hierarchically organized party would win control of the state, and *then* "socialism" could be created, assuming that is what the party wanted to do then. The anarchists, however, practiced and theoretically defended a socialism from below, without a party, aiming at the replacement of the state with federally coordinated collectives, controlled from the bottom up.

Richards and Bookchin, while showing how distinctively libertarian the Spanish anarchists were, do not avoid the difficult task of criticizing them. Authoritarianism entered the anarchist movement by means of the so-called "influential militant." Especially in the F.A.I., comrades who showed great physical courage and daring became heroes who were looked up to. Unfortunately, courage could and did substitute for political wisdom, so that when Garcia Oliver and Federica Montseny

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(both respected F.A.I. militants, whose physical courage and daring were unquestionsable) joined the Popular Front government, it was hard to accuse them of "reformism." I agree with the analysis of a recent commentator, who argued that the F.A.I. militants became unintentionally authoritarian. "Because they have sacrificed themselves for revolution, they have felt they have the right to demand that others sacrifice their felt needs, desires and goals to the judgment of these 'friends of revolution.' "[5] Wary of bureaucratic manipulation, the Spanish anarchists were less alert to manipulation by heroic militants—a problem that reappeared in the anti-centralist currents of the New Left in the 1960s.

Another problem was political collaboration. Gaston Leval, Augustin Souchy, Dolgoff, and many others justify the C.N.T.-F.A.I. decision to cooperate with the Popular Front for two basic reasons: it was necessary for fighting against the fascists, and it was more democratic than imposing an anarchist dictatorship. But I think Vernon Richards correctly disposes of this argument in Chapter IV of his book. The anarchists were in no position to impose a dictatorship because except in Catalonia and a few other places, they were not the dominant force; and where they were dominant, they could impose a dictatorship only by violating anarchist principles. In fact, the rural collectives lived side by side with "individualist" peasants who were not anarchists. The other reason—that collaboration was necessary for success in the anti-fascist war—is contradicted by anarchist theory and historical fact. Why should the state, in this one instance, be the best vehicle for getting something done? Anarchist theory, if it had been adhered to, would have found laughable the suggestion that fascism, of all things, was best fought against by using the government apparatus. Historical fact would redeem anarchist theory because by collaborating with their statist enemies, the anarchists put their necks in a noose the Stalinists gladly pulled tight. The war was lost by the republican state, but it might have been won by voluntary militias in conjunction with collectivized farms and worker-managed industries. The Stalinists would like us to believe the lie that the war was lost solely because the democratic countries did not follow Russia's lead in "helping" Spain fight fascism.

A problem that was not argued much at the time was the reliance on direct action at the expense of less dramatic educational work. During the Civil War, for example, Vernon Richards points to an area of crucial neglect: the anarchists should have followed Camillo Berneri's advice and propagandized among the Moroccans to turn them against Franco. The history of the Spanish anarchists, as told so eloquently by Bookchin, is filled with examples of heroic but futile rebellions. Although the anarchists gained adherents as a result of these actions, one wonders how many others turned away from anarchism because of the same heroism.

The subtitle of Bookchin's study is "The Heroic Years," and "heroic" is an appropriately ambivalent word for describing these remarkable revolutionaries. As striking as their heroism, which entailed bold bank robberies, liberating prisoners from jail, and fighting against troops better equipped than they, was their innocence. I do not mean a kind of ignorance of evil or a blind faith in the goodness of humanity; of all people, the Spanish anarchists knew how brutal people can be. But what other group of revolutionaries would have, as a matter of course, on the eve of the Civil War at the 1936 Saragossa Conference, seriously considered the fate of the poorest peasants from the south, many of whom were devoted naturists, nudists, and vegetarians?

5. Muswell Hillbilly, "On Terrorism and Authoritarianism," *Fifth Estate* (August 1977).

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Daniel Guérin, obviously touched, writes: "As these groups would be unable to supply all their own needs, the congress anticipated that their delegates to the meetings of the confederation of communes would be able to negotiate special economic agreements with the other agricultural and industrial communes. Does this make us smile? On the eve of a vast, bloody, social transformation, the C.N.T. did not think it foolish to try to meet the infinitely varied aspirations of individual human beings."[6]

The whole point of anarchist revolution was to create a society where the infinitely varied aspirations of people could be realized. In Dolgoff's anthology on the collectives, one finds the fruition of a libertarian culture that took decades to create; considering this fact, one must be careful when discussing anarchist spontaneity. There is example after example of working people living out the so-called "utopian" dreams of 19th-century theory. Where money was not in fact abolished altogether, a "family wage" was instituted, whereby one received what one needed. Those who think anarchism is too simplistic an ideology by which to run modern industry must read how the Catalonian munitions industry or the Barcelona transportation industry was reorganized. That anarchism cannot possibly coordinate a complex agricultural economy is contradicted by the experience of the rural collectives. One thing the Dolgoff book does in a definitive way is to disprove the myth that anarchist ideas on decentralized, worker-managed economic reorganization are unworkable or have never been tested. Sixty percent of Spanish land was collectivized, and over eight million Spaniards were involved in the anarchist collectives—all during a bloody civil war.

Richards' book is an important polemic, first written in 1953 and revised in 1972, criticizing the errors of the Spanish anarchists. Despite his tone, which at times is strident, his arguments are persuasive. Although victimized by the Stalinists, the anarchists were not blameless, as I have already indicated. Nor are their mistakes to be excused or forgotten. It is hard to imagine a "Lessons" of the Spanish revolution more insightful than Richards', but one must wait for the second volume of Murray Bookchin's study. The first volume takes Spanish anarchism up to the Civil War, which the second volume will treat exclusively. Bookchin's is the first history of Spanish anarchism in English, and it is the most thorough history in any language; the scholarship and research that went into it are impressive. It is eminently readable, as is Dolgoff's anthology which, superseded in some respects by the recent translations of Leval and Peirats, is still the best introduction to the anarchist collectives.

Anti-authoritarian Marxists seem to flounder in their attempt to correct Marxism's bias towards centralist control. Whereas Gramsci and Pannekoek came close to articulating anarchist ideas on self-management, their Marxian sense of history and politics condemned their libertarianism to futility. *Bona fide* workers' self-management can exist only within a confederation of autonomous communes; it cannot coexist with the state or vanguard political party, both of which will inevitably try to control the social revolution. As many Marxists and former Marxists begin to reevaluate the entire concept of social revolution, there is no period more appropriate for study than the Spanish revolution carried out by the anarchists.

Michael Scrivener

6. Daniel Guérin, *Anarchism, From Theory to Practice* (New York, 1970), p. 123.

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Serge Christophe Kolm. *La Transition Socialiste*. Paris: Editions du cerf, 1977. 212 pages.*

The possibility of a leftist coalition winning in France in the March 1978 elections raises in the heart of industrialized Europe memories of the Chilean experience and disturbs the sleep of the Right and Left alike. But, was the common program really on the level of exorcising the ghost of Chile or Portugal? Is it possible to undertake a successful transition to socialism without perishing or betraying it? Kolm's book, which has unleashed a hornets' nest of polemics in France, tries to answer these problems in a brutally unprejudiced way. Although at this point (October 1977) the leftist coalition is in crisis, it is still likely that the Left will be able to present a united slate in time for the elections, even if it can't agree on how to update the common program. That should be enough to overcome the present "majority," which is more divided than ever, lacks any program and which has inherited the complete failure of its policies. After a Left victory, the problems raised by Kolm will emerge full-blown, because it would be difficult for a victorious Left to avoid following a political program similar to that laid out in the common program, while it is easy to imagine that the movement of the masses will force a radicalization of the clash. Kolm's issues, then, are very real and should be discussed in spite of the crisis of the Left coalition.

Kolm begins with a discussion of the vicissitudes of Chile and Portugal to understand their weak points and to admonish the Left against repeating the same errors. According to Kolm, the continued existence of market mechanisms during the first phase of the transition to socialism (mechanisms that certainly won't disappear by magic) could play a dirty trick on the Left. Thus, it is likely that it will unleash a wave of labor demands (exactly as it did in Chile and Portugal) for wage increases and for more consumer goods. Since industry will not be able to keep up with soaring demands for a lack of reserve productive resources this will give rise to galloping inflation, a deficit in the balance of payments, and currency devaluation. The Left will lose ground, end up socially isolated and will be politically defeated. This has been the Chilean-Portuguese scenario that was being prepared for France, according to Kolm, because the common program promises far too much in the way of wages without providing for corresponding structural changes (pp. 33, 43, 58, 155). Kolm concludes that the Left must work at three levels: for the short-, medium- and long range (p. 65). The Left's failing is always that it does not link short-range demands (i.e., wage increases) with long-range changes through a series of intermediate transformations. Kolm thus outlines several measures designed to control the balance of payments and imports (pp. 122-126) that are, for the most part, pretty traditional, even though the discussion becomes much more original when he proposes a series of medium- and long-range changes: "Tearing the allocation of goods and services from the market system guards against the eccentricities of price mechanisms. In particular, redistributing more according to needs than according to work makes up for fluctuations in real wages." "The problem of distribution ends by becoming secondary: it becomes more important to give than to receive. The goal is not 'to each according to the needs of others.' This holds not only for material needs, but also and even more for moral needs and social relations. The question 'who gives what?' is cancelled out by 'who gives to whom?'—how, and only secondarily, "what." The main

*Translated from the Italian by Patricia Tummons.

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function of distribution must therefore change" "To suppress price increases, there is nothing more radical than to suppress prices altogether."

These three quotes (pp. 66, 111, 144) leave us somewhat perplexed. With justification, one French Communist (Claude Ravel) has accused Kolm in the columns of Sartre's journal of being utopian. It is true, of course, that mercantile categories cannot disappear overnight, but it is also true that they will decline only when their material base is eliminated. For example, prices at the level of limited consumer goods is one means of restricting their consumption, even in a phase of transition to socialism. To eliminate prices and to distribute without regard to price according to needs means only one thing: rationing. But rationing implies social tensions and bureaucratic controls, and is a remedy to be used only in exceptional cases (Kolm does not speak of rationing, but it is impossible to see concretely how his program of suppressing prices and of distributing according to needs can be implemented without rationing). On the other hand, in a society based on labor-time, the distribution of goods can only be based on labor and in relation to labor (with variations, of course, yet the role of labor must remain central). For example: it is difficult to give a quantity of goods to a worker with 6 children that is three times the amount given to a worker with the same qualifications but without any children, just because the first worker has greater needs. Obviously, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the first has six children, but not to the point of modifying radically the whole system of distribution according to work. Otherwise conflicts will inevitably explode: one cannot reward in very different ways similarly qualified workers because of different needs. (By redistribution we mean any kind of disposition of goods made even indirectly by the socialist collective to individual laborers).

Such conflicts would inevitably result because those who do little work in relation to what they receive (because of high needs) and whose work therefore does not repay society for what they receive from it, exploit those who produce those goods. Such a system would reproduce social conflicts and parasitism, neither of which can be resolved by the pathetic altruism that Kolm invokes in the previously quoted passages. Moralistic appeals without structural foundations are empty preachings.

Of course mercantile categories are not to be endured but must be subordinated to the plan, attacked and gradually eliminated in a process of transition to socialism. Yet, this requires realism, i.e., it is a matter of how to eliminate the material bases of such categories. Otherwise, the process ends up by proposing a kind of rationing according to needs which is absurd, inequitable and full of dangerous conflicts. As for the structural conditions which would have to stabilize the overcoming of mercantile categories, Kolm is very hazy (especially when he speaks of the economic organization of the future socialist society: "It is what we could call decentralized indicative planning. Each worker's income depends on his needs, qualifications or seniority, but not (or as little as possible) on the results of his production. This is self-management without profits. On the other hand, this cannot exist if goods and services are merely transferred without being sold. What motivates workers is the desire to render a service and to do their work well... This system has its plan and its market. The totality of contracts and projects can be called a plan, but it is a decentralized and contractual system. It is not merely an indicative plan nor is it truly imperative" (pp. 74, 81).

There must be others who, like me, while favorable towards utopians, still lose patience with such a huge and indigestible mess.

Initially there is no market because there is no profit, and workers' retribution is not

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determined by their product (other than marginally) and, lastly, goods and services are neither bought nor sold. We can presume then, that the market does not exist. This is at p. 74, but at p. 81 the market reappears and from indicative (p. 74) the plan becomes neither "merely indicative" nor "truly imperative" (what lucidity). The mess is total. How does this plan work, a plan that isn't imperative, doesn't swallow the market and which has no project? No one knows. In other words, Kolm has an insane fear of bureaucratic planning and of the market, so that he continually rejects them both—but without positively overcoming them—so that they both constantly resurface. The market, rejected on p. 74, re-emerges on page 81 (to be again rejected on p. 144); what is an indicative plan on p. 74 becomes, in some confused way, a semi-operative plan by p. 81. If Kolm meant on p. 81 an initial phase in which the market exists and on p. 74 the final stage of the process, then his discussion fails to clarify the various moments of this shift, and its dynamic articulations.

Although the preceding criticisms may be harsh, they are not intended as a radical rejection of Kolm's book. While it does not contain a positive proposal, it nonetheless focuses on a real problem: faced with the legitimate rise in popular demands, the Left may find itself in trouble. Here I disagree with the response of Claude Ravel, the brilliant French Communist, according to whom the common program is a serious matter provided that one doesn't take it too seriously, since what is important is what results from it (i.e., the development of the mass movement following a Left victory). Aside from the fact that this attitude clashes with the life-or-death question that the French Communist Party raised concerning the updating of the common program, it seems clear that the confrontation cannot be precipitated (or at least it would be too dangerous to do that) without some hypothetical solutions to the (real) problems that Kolm raises—hypotheses that naturally be rejected or modified by the movement, but which would be a point of departure and of experimentation.

In this context, it seems that Kolm has too easily liquidated a real possibility of maneuver. He says that in order to confront workers' rising demands it is not possible to increase production because the unused productive capacity left by the heritage of capitalism is much lower than generally believed. In support of this he cites the Chilean events where the Popular Unity Party assumed that the unused capacity was about 40%, while a study by the Chilean Ministry of Industry subsequently placed it at only 12% (pp. 185-186).

One should be wary of such studies: even in Allende's Chile certain studies were made in order to justify and legitimate *a posteriori* the weaknesses and defeats of some policies. Actually, the 40% margin the Unity Party estimated was, in relation to an underdeveloped country, decidedly realistic: recently in Venezuela, a country just as developed (or underdeveloped) as Allende's Chile, the unused productive capacity was estimated at 45% in the first half of the 1970s—the low level of demand being the most common cause of such a phenomenon. This phenomenon, however, exists also in advanced countries where, even in boom periods, there is always an average margin of 10% unused, which becomes 25% at the first signs of recession. The Hoover report claimed, in its time, that U.S. printing and clothing industries were functioning at half their actual capacity. As for England, Mackers reports that a recent study there has determined that the real capacity corresponds to 130% of that declared by the industrialists. Why is this? In the capitalist system there is always—even in advanced countries—a sizable unused productive capacity caused by the market fluctuations. Confronted with an oscillating demand, the entrepreneur must be prepared to meet the maximum market demand (not just the average).

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Otherwise he will lose the best opportunities of the market to his competitors.

The waste of invested capital caused by the anarchy and oscillation of the market is normal, and it is clear why the industrialists are unwilling to acknowledge it. To do so would be tantamount to admitting that this society is founded on waste. (When this is admitted, as in Italy, it is done in such a way as to spur workers to greater efforts or to lament the damage caused by strikes.) Objective waste of wealth is tied so to subjective waste (unemployment and underemployment), which is no less real. Even in France, where unemployment has exceeded one million owing to the slowdown in production over the last few years, there are sizable reserves in unused productive capacity.

The problem for the Left is to utilize these reserves in order to meet a soaring demand without a corresponding inflation. This is possible even in the short-run only by resolutely attacking one of the central points of the capitalist organization of labor, i.e., labor time. To exemplify this, let us look at a recent history of Italian trade unions, which is instructive for other countries as well. In 1972-73, Italian unions, in response to the companies' scarce utilization of plants (owing to absenteeism and strikes) proposed a new discipline for working time: no longer eight hours five days a week, but six hours for six days at the same wage; no longer a short week, but a short day. With this system, generating a new work shift (and, therefore, employing new workers) would have lead to full plant utilization and would have reconciled the interests of capital with those of the working class (whose work week is reduced from 40 to 36 hours, at the same wage, and with an increase in employment). On paper it seemed brilliant, but in practice it ran into the joint opposition of both workers and owners. The former did not want to sacrifice free Saturdays in order to rationalize the system that exploited them. The latter were terrorized by the idea of producing with more workers unsalable commodities. Since capitalism is so structured that to work at 100% plant capacity would produce unsalable commodities, the proposal was unrealistic in the capitalist context. But would it be the same in a period of transition to socialism? The terms of the problem would change: the workers would be required to modify their life-style in order to contribute to the edification of their own system; a global economic plan that would prevent (even if only partially, at first) the oscillation of the market.

This is an area that opens up enormous possibilities, and it is surprising that Kolm readily liquidates them. The common program, in fact, was dangerously radical inasmuch as the nationalization that it initially called for (leaving aside those additions requested by the Communists in September 1977) was certainly not an expression of a program of class collaboration: the nine economic groups to be expropriated dominate the key sectors of the French economy, and in 1975 they had revenues of more than 100 billion francs (about 21 billion dollars). These groups are not at all about to go bankrupt. As exponents of the left-wing of the French Socialist party have pointed out (one of the most interesting groups in the European Left), this program entails a break with capitalism without, however, clearly posing the problems of the transition to socialism. Thus, it is dangerously radical: the program is developed both too much and too little. This ambiguity can be resolved in two possible ways: either with a regression to capitalism or with the beginning of the transition to socialism. Much depends on the evolution of the class struggle both nationally and internationally after March 1978 and, in the case of an evolution toward socialism, the changing of the structure of the work-time that is capitalism's legacy will be posed very clearly.

Another point on which Kolm fails is concerning international conditions: good or

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bad, in the fall of Allende's regime the international situation counted even more than did inflation. In fact, in spite of high inflation, popular support for Allende did not diminish so that it became necessary for right-wing forces to stage the coup with substantial foreign help. Inflation is not, therefore, the only central problem. When speaking of France's economic and political conditioning relations with respect to the international scene, we must start on the most crucial one: the European Common Market, to which Kolm dedicates a pale hint of a single line on p. 137. Yet, there is a debate about it within the French Left: the journal *Economie* has printed a cartoon that shows France, after a hypothetical Left victory, cut off from Europe and set adrift in the Atlantic. It is an ironic but justified intuition. Despite Mitterrand's "Europeanism," (which is not shared by either the Communists or the socialists' left wing in France), the common program is in antithesis to the conception of the Common Market. The Common Market is based on the free circulation of capital so much that when the Italian government established Gepi (a public financial institution that bails out small and medium sized firms in crisis) it was argued within the Common Market that even this modest intervention clashed with the principle of the free circulation of capital. The matter was not pursued further, yet it is indicative of what the Common Market is all about. This modest attempt on the part of the Italian government is insignificant when compared to nationalization. If the common program were ever to be realized, the Common Market, which does not foresee a Europe of the people but that of capital, will not enter a crisis—since such a crisis already exists: in fact, the Common Market is as full of holes as Swiss cheese—but it will enter into a coma. A Common Market without France cannot exist. Thus, in spite of Mitterrand's Europeanist declarations, a Left victory in France would place on the agenda the end of the Common Market, which could explode all (or almost all) of the continent's equilibria. If such is the case, one-line mention is truly a poor showing.

Antonio Carlo

Bernard-Henri Lévy. *La Barbarie à visage humain.* Paris: Grasset, 1977. 226 pages.

Bernard-Henri Lévy, a former Maoist, is the editor of the Grasset "Collections Figures et Théoriciens" which at present comprises what has become known as "la nouvelle philosophie." Included under this ambiguous but clever media designation (which originated with Lévy) are recent works by Jean-Marie Benoist, Hervé Chayette, Jean-Paul Dollé, Michel Guérin, Guy Lardreau, Christian Jambet, Michel Le Bris, Philippe Nemo, Francoise Paul-Lévy and the provocative best selling manifesto by editor Lévy, *La Barbarie à visage humain* (*Barbarism with a Human Face*). André Glucksmann has attempted to avoid having his own work labeled as "la nouvelle philosophie" but after the appearance of his *Les Maîtres Penseurs* (Grasset, 1977) he would appear to be stuck with the designation.[1]

1. Glucksmann's *Les Maîtres Penseurs* and his earlier *La Cuisinière Et Le Mangeur D'Hommes* (Seuil, 1975) are probably the most important works associated with "la nouvelle philosophie." Useful introductions to the "nouveaux philosophes" can be found in *Telos* 33 (Fall 1977) and in *Magazine Littéraire* "Vingt Ans De Philosophie En France" 127-128 (Septembre 1977). Page numbered references in this review to the comments on "la nouvelle philosophie" by Glucksmann, Debray, Castoriadis and Rancière are from *Telos* 33.

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The varied works of "la nouvelle philosophie" should be discussed calmly on their own merits. But for Lévy scholarly restraint is not necessarily in order: his book is a dramatic intervention in French politics which has brought forth a hailstorm of criticism. The aristocratic Lévy has achieved such prominence that his elegant photograph takes up an entire page of the October 28, 1977 *Paris Match*. Despite his obvious talent for media showmanship Lévy's *La Barbarie à visage humain* deserves serious attention. It will not fail to disturb anyone on the Left who reads it.

Lévy sets out to define socialism in a new way: socialism *is* the Gulag Archipelago, the culmination of the Western idea of progress which appears in its most concentrated form in the repressive Soviet state.[2] (Against the "Progress" of Condorcet, the "Perfectibility" of Turgot, the "Liberty" of Voltaire and Diderot, Lévy urges a rereading of Rousseau, p. 37.) In the West, Marxism has become a religious dogma which seeks to install a new prince of power. Lévy scoffs at the Marxist who sees every defeat and every atrocity as a momentary setback on the road to socialism. "For a socialist there is no Evil which isn't the dark side of Good" (p. 88).

Lévy isn't talking only about Diamat but Marxism in general, although the only Marxist theoretician with whom he seems familiar is Louis Althusser (p. 201). In contrast to the optimistic militant of the Left, Lévy would like to see a new kind of pessimistic intellectual emerge, who would oppose barbarism in all its forms from a standpoint of individual dissent outside of any party or organization.[3] For André Glucksmann the most effective resistance may simply be "a smile, perhaps thoughts, perhaps songs" (p. 101). The important question the "nouveaux philosophes" are posing, one which Philippe Sollers asks as well in a highly favorable review of *La Barbarie à visage humain*, is "what happens if socialism is another name for barbarism?"[4] Behind this inquiry stands the powerful moral example of the Russian dissidents.

The "nouveaux philosophes" are as obsessed with Russia as the old Stalinists whom they detest. The new Russian hero is Solzhenitsyn (the Anti-Lenin) who has become the "Dante of our time," according to Lévy (p. 179). In contrast to the Eurocommunists, the "nouveaux philosophes" have returned to the Russian Revolution, only this time they have pulled it inside out. They have become the Negative-Bolsheviks, courting the dissidents of the oppressive Soviet state system in front of the media and, it seems at times, even mimicking the spiritual tone of Solzhenitsyn.

Solzhenitsyn's condemnation of Bolshevism forms the very core of *La Barbarie à visage humain*. For Solzhenitsyn the Gulag Archipelago is not the horrible side effect of the struggles unleashed by the Revolution, but the very essence of Bolshevism. Hence his accusation that the Soviet police state didn't originate with Stalin but was evident from the first days of Lenin's leadership. Part of the great impact of Solzhenitsyn's enormous and outstanding work, *The Gulag Archipelago*, is its "literary

2. Lévy cites Kostas Axelos of the *Arguments* group who advanced a similar position in his *Marx, penseur de la technique: de l'aliénation de l'homme à la conquête du monde*. Cf. Mark Poster, *Existential Marxism in Postwar France* (Princeton, 1977), pp. 64-65.

3. In one of his last interviews the old philosopher at Tübingen looked back across the expanse of our century and still maintained his belief in the principle of hope. He pointed to the collapse of the dictatorships in Greece and Portugal and the victory in Vietnam and reminded his readers that a Marxist cannot be a pessimist. Cf. "Ernst Bloch: entretiens sur le siècle" (by Jean-Michel Palmier), *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* 2530-2531 (29 Avril 1976 et 6 Mai 1976). One of the most intelligent discussions of the role of intellectuals in the revolutionary process is Alvin W. Gouldner's "Prologue to a Theory of Revolutionary Intellectuals," *Telos* 26 (Winter 1975-76).

4. Philippe Sollers, "Marxism-Opium of the People," *Manchester Guardian Weekly-Le Monde* English section (July 10, 1977).

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investigation" of the massive terror of the Soviet state.[5] He compares Soviet police state methods to the crimes of the Tsars and even to the Nazis and finds that nothing can compare with what occurred under the Bolsheviks. Solzhenitsyn's explanation for this horrible repression is that Marxism, like fascism, is a fanatical ideology used for terrible ends by men seduced by evil in a barbarous age. For Lévy as well, Marxism "is not a science" but just another ideology whose horrors are not deviations but the direct result of the laws of *Capital* (p. 182).

Ernest Mandel has attempted to provide a critique of Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*.[6] He tries to show that democracy remained in existence during Lenin's tenure over the Soviet state. Mandel admits that there were abuses but he maintains that there was nothing like the system of terror which came into existence during the Stalinist era. The Marxist Russian dissident Roy Medvedev develops the same line of argument, attributing many of the abuses of power under Lenin to the chaos of the civil war.[7] But as Medvedev also points out, "Lenin too used the verb 'shoot' much more often than existing circumstances demanded." Medvedev also quotes an order Lenin sent to G. Fedorov, head of the local soviet in the province of Nizhni Novgorod: "No efforts to be spared: mass terror to be introduced, *hundreds* of prostitutes who have intoxicated our soldiers, and former officers, etc., to be shot and deported" (p. 32). (At this point, if I were his lawyer, I would advise Lenin to cop a plea to a lesser charge.)

In his polemic (which, not surprisingly, includes a defense of the Trotskyist opposition) Mandel scores a major point against Solzhenitsyn by pointing to a glaring omission in his historical chronicle of evil: "Why has Solzhenitsyn forgotten religious fanaticism? Religious wars have 'caused' the death of millions of people throughout history. Moreover what about nationalism and the ideology of 'defence of the fatherland' in the imperialist countries, which in the First World War alone 'caused' more deaths than the entire Stalinist terror? Is Solzhenitsyn's forgetfulness perhaps a result of the fact that he is an advocate of these two ideologies, religion and nationalism?" (p. 56).

Mandel's retort incorporates a fundamental issue that he never develops in his critique, namely the residual power of religion within the "socialist" countries. While official religion may be on the decline, its ability to wield the moral sword of opposition against oppression persists. Religious influence in the West remains pervasive. Its appearance within the ranks of the New Left (or in the case of the "nouveaux philosophes," the ex-New Left) should really come as no surprise. The religious impulse was always a part of the New Left. And one of the heroes of the 60's, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, ended up as a martyr with all the atributes of Jesus Christ. The real surprise is just how little attention has been paid by Marxists to the overwhelming continuing influence of religion, as Perry Anderson has noted: "Strange historical object *par excellence*, whose peculiar temporality has never coincided with that of a simple sequence from one economy or polity to another, but has overlapped and outlived several in a rhythm of its own, the Church has never received theorization

5. Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago 1918-1956-An Experiment in Literary Investigation*, trans. by Thomas P. Whitney (New York, 1973). Two volumes.

6. Ernest Mandel, "Solzhenitsyn, Stalinism and the October Revolution," *New Left Review* 86 (July-August, 1974).

7. Roy Medvedev, "On Gulag Archipelago," *New Left Review* 85 (May-June, 1974). Cf. also Zhores Medvedev (ed.), *Samizdat Register I: Voices of the Socialist Opposition in the Soviet Union* (London, 1977).

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within historical materialism."[8]

The anti-barbarism of the "nouveaux philosophes" is a powerful moral (religious?) indictment of the abuses of state power, which refuses to accept any explanations or excuses based on the difficult realities of a historical period. For Mandel the positive economic and social gains of the Bolshevik Revolution still merit human respect. There was terror, yes, but (and here Mandel relies on some classic revolutionary questions) if, as Solzhenitsyn suggests, Russia was not ripe for revolution, "What was it ripe for? For Tsarist barbarism? For eternal famine, poverty and illiteracy?" (p. 58).

Medvedev also asks how we can ever hope to build a decent society if politics is viewed solely as the realm of blind passion and evil. Solzhenitsyn's answer to these questions is also a classic reply: belief in god is the sole moral bulwark of humanity. Lévy's response is more sophisticated but the answer is basically the same: the only hope lies in moral opposition to the power of the state.

Régis Debray is correct when he says that the "nouveaux philosophes" have tired of our century. But who can blame them? It is possible to write thousands of pages on the genuine material accomplishments of the "socialist" countries. But isn't the point made by the "nouveaux philosophes" the really valid one? That revolution in this century has led to the strengthening of the powers of the state? The better material goods are there but so are the better systems of repression, better rockets and armaments, better technology (nuclear plants for Cuba, SST's for Russia, etc.).[9]

And what about Third World revolutions? Lucio Magri, a former leader of the *Il Manifesto* group which has now been incorporated into a new party called *Partito di Unità Proletaria per il Communismo* (PDUP-PC), said in a recent interview that, "There has been a crisis, even a defeat of the revolutionary movements in the underdeveloped countries, from the movement in Palestine to the revolutionary movements in Latin America. Even in the sectors of the third world where harsh conflicts continue—for example in Africa—there is no clear alignment of imperialist forces on one side and anti-imperialist forces on the other. Rather, the confrontation is taking place in a much more ambiguous way, combining national conflicts, conflicts between local bourgeoisies—many things are intertwined."[10]

In Cambodia, for example, the revolution exists in a backward political and economic context (due in large measure to U.S. terror bombing which drove tens of thousands of peasants from the countryside, as the daily press seems to have forgotten). The "nouveaux philosophes" have been in the forefront of the campaign to denounce the reported Cambodian "red terror," based on the sketchy reports of a momumental bloodbath. But isn't it true that the first reports from the Gulag were also sketchy? Who wants to repeat that silence? The basic question is whether Communist revolution in this century is revolutionary in any sense of the word? Castoriadis is also wondering, "Is it not time to ask what is going on in China and Algeria, in Guinea and Cuba, in Vietnam and Cambodia?" (p. 109). The "nouveaux philosophes" cannot be blamed for asking the right questions in the wrong way. As

8. Perry Anderson, *Passages from Antiquity To Feudalism* (London, 1974), p. 131.

9. E.J. Hobsbawm provides a more favorable explanation of "the extraordinary success of Communism as a system of education for political work" in his *Revolutionaries* (New York, 1973), p. 6.

10. "Italy, Social Democracy, and Revolution in the West: An Interview with Lucio Magri," *Socialist Revolution* 36 (November-December, 1977), p. 128. Gerard Chaliand also provides an important reassessment of third world revolution in *Revolution in the Third World: Myths and Prospects* (New York, 1977).

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Debray admits, the fault is with Marxism itself: "If the current crisis of the socialist idea provokes a return of the same old songs, it is because for a long time the officials of the idea have not been doing their job" (p. 115).

Lévy's book fills a vacuum created by the mood of pessimism that exists on the Left. The atmosphere of deep-seated demoralization is rooted not only in the end of the 60s but also in the C.I.A. sponsored bloody coup d'etat which brought down the popularly elected Allende government in Chile, the chaos and setbacks of the Portuguese struggle, and in the general stalemate of socialism. The apparent reversal of the Chinese "cultural revolution" has also had a sobering effect, especially on Western Maoists (who needed some sobering up, in any case). With the end of spontaneity and the passing of the mass movements, the intellectuals on the New Left have remained as the inheritors of a decade of struggle. The most illustrious intellectual citadel of all was the French intellectual New Left—the guardians of the ideas unleashed during May '68. It would be easy to suggest that the collapse of part of this outpost is the inevitable result of the seriality of the times, or that it is merely a temporary setback. But it seems too late in the century for this kind of explanation. The problems of the Left cannot be viewed solely as the result of the particularities of the crisis of capitalist society.

As the New Left transformed itself into a mass anti-imperialist movement after the U.S. escalated the war in Vietnam, it began to flirt with Marxism-Leninism. Who can ever forget that passionate night during the "Vietnam Day" teach-in on the U.C., Berkeley campus in May, 1965 when Isaac Deutscher, looking like an old Bolshevik come back to earth, told 35,000 cheering protesters: "We must, we can and we must, give back to class struggle its old dignity. We may and we must restore meaning to the great ideas, partly conflicting ideas by which man is still living: the ideas of liberalism, democracy, and communism—yes, the idea of communism."[11] There is validity in Lévy's contention that the old idea of communism was restored and that all the old ideas were born again as a religion after May '68 (p. 212).

The victory of the Vietnamese liberation forces was received in the West with only scattered applause by a Left which had long since ground itself up in the meatgrinder of Marxist-Leninist sectarian feuds. And a unified postwar Vietnam was on the difficult path of economic and social development led by an authoritarian Marxist state. There is no reason to believe that this country will develop a revolutionary alternative to the alienated social relations of capitalist society. In retrospect the idea that the third world "socialist" countries are actually undergoing socialist revolutions seems naive if not preposterous (that these countries are generally more humane in their economic and social policies compared with third world countries dominated by multinational corporations is not in question). The origins of the illusion are clear: the strategy of revolutionary war developed to perfection in this century by Lenin, Trotsky, Mao and Ho.[12] Successful revolutionary wars will bring about profound economic changes but whatever revolutionary tendencies may develop always end

11. Isaac Deutscher, "Myths of the Cold War," in *We Accuse*, a collection of the speeches at the "Vietnam Day" teach-in, U.C. Berkeley May 21-22, 1965 (Berkeley, 1965), p. 52.

12. Régis Debray offers a reminder in *La Critique des Armes* (two volumes, Paris, 1974) that revolutionary wars have been successful when the revolutionaries have been popularly identified as the leaders of a patriotic resistance against foreign aggression. This has been true from the time of the Spanish resistance to the Napoleonic Empire to the Maoist people's war against the Japanese. The European CP's also owed their strength in the period of the Second World War to their role as leaders of the resistance. Cf. Vol. 1, pp. 98-99.

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up being welded to the goal of rapid social development. This is particularly clear from recent events in China.[13]

Régis Debray, still mentally dug in on some jungle hillside, has attempted a valiant defense of Marxism against the "springtime weepers" of "la nouvelle philosophie": "Because these infantrymen are advancing in a phalanx on the sparse summits of pessimism, we know to keep a look-out for trouble in the press, radio and television" (p. 111). The anti-Stalinist franchise doesn't belong to the dilettantes of "la nouvelle philosophie," according to Debray. These pessimists live Stalinism vicariously in the spotlight of the media while the real heroes of the anti-Stalinist opposition, the Trotskyists, are ignored (until now Debray has had few kind words for the Trotskyists). But this is the worst sort of reply. It is just what Lévy is talking about. Marxism-Leninism is allowed to absorb the moral indictment into its own history, its own polemics and deadly feuds.[14] Anything is still possible. The "nouveaux philosophes" may be perched on the shoulders of Solzhenitsyn, acting saintly and hurling moral thunderbolts; but with Trotsky the question is power, not the Gulag.

Jacques Rancière's critique of Lévy is more successful. The students of Althusser were able to dispense with Marxism bag and baggage because Althusserian Marxism never amounted to anything more than a "theory of theoretical practice." "Are not these anti-barbaric urgencies, this bare-handed struggle of the new anti-Marxist thinkers, simply the reverse of the Marxist Althusser's 'class struggle in theory?' We have here a simple inversion of a postulate formulated in the same terms: those who attribute all of socialism's ills to the fact of not having read the texts properly are answered by those who attribute the trouble to their having been read too well"(p. 121).

It is much more difficult to reject the living distorted reality of Marxism as it exists among the large numbers of people who support the popular Communist parties of Italy, France, Spain, Cuba and Vietnam. This political force is a significant factor in the balance of power both within and outside the various regions concerned. The irony of the Western European Communist Parties is that while they certainly do not hold forth the promise of revolution, by the very fact of their existence they help to preserve democratic liberties. In the face of a frontal rightist assault, Eurocommunism anywhere on the continent could well collapse like a house of cards. But the Right can never take this collapse for granted. The only problem with this positive assessment is that Eurocommunism, unable to achieve its political objectives (facing stalemate in

13. Cf. Sarel Lee, "Subterranean Individualism: Contradictions of Politicization," *Telos* 33 (Fall 1977).

14. This is an important part of the question: Marxism flattens every realm of experience outside of its own rigid and stultifying categories and kills the creative imagination. As an example Lévy points to the work of the Althusserian literary critic Pierre Macherey and his "theory of literary production" (p. 199). A summary which praises Macherey's work can be found in Terry Eagleton's "Pierre Macherey and the Theory of Literary Production," *The Minnesota Review* 5 (Fall 1975). Sartre's study of Flaubert, *L'Idiot de la famille*, is the most impressive attempt to transcend Marxist literary criticism. Lévy also refers to Marxism's boneheaded attempts to absorb (i.e., neutralize) psychoanalysis (p. 199). Many of the tragedies of the Left can be attributed to the failure of many radicals to even be aware of Freud's observation that, "The past...lives on in the ideologies of the super-ego and so long as it operates through the super-ego it plays a powerful part in human life, independent of economic conditions." Cf. in Russell Jacoby, *Social Amnesia* (Boston, 1975), p. 84. Freud, through his French interpreter Jacques Lacan, has had a major influence on the "nouveaux philosophes" (especially Lardreau and Jambet). Lacan's work is slowly becoming available in English. Cf. Lacan's *Ecrits-A Selection* trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York, 1977).

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Italy and setbacks in France), may slowly be on the wane.[15] But myths and religions have a way of persisting. Marxism may be saddled with the Gulag but a good guess would be that among third world revolutionaries its legacy of struggle tips the scales in its favor. After all, even within the Soviet opposition there are those who oppose the state in the name of "revolutionary" Marxism-Leninism (although their numbers are probably small). One additional political problem is that one's right-wing acquaintances are the first to applaud the "nouveaux philosophes' " break with Marxism. Needless to say, tossing Marxism out the window poses serious problems for anyone on the Left who is still interested in political activism.

At the conclusion of *La Barbarie à visage humain* Lévy declares that the intellectual must be a moralist in the classical sense like Kant, Camus or Merleau-Ponty (p. 225). The reference to Camus is especially to the point. In both its politics and its temperament, Lévy's book is close to Camus' *The Rebel* (New York, 1956). Like *The Rebel*, Lévy's book is being debated during a period of post-revolutionary disillusionment. And Lévy must certainly relish Camus' description of Marx as "the prophet of justice without mercy who lies, by mistake, in the unbelievers' plot at Highgate cemetery!" (p. 306). Like Lévy today, Camus also once asked a generation to "forsake our age and its adolescent furies"(p. 306). And about three decades before "la nouvelle philosophie" Camus also wrote an obituary for Marxism: "The will to power, the nihilist struggle for domination and authority, have done considerably more than sweep away the Marxist utopia. This has become in its turn a historic fact destined to be put to use like all the other historic facts. This idea, which was supposed to dominate history has become lost in history; the concept of abolishing means has been reduced to a means in itself and cynically manipulated for the most banal and bloody ends. The uninterrupted development of production has not ruined the capitalist regime to the benefit of revolution. It has equally been the ruin of both bourgeois and revolutionary society to the benefit of an idol that has the snout of power" (p. 220).

In the struggles which came after *The Rebel* Camus' political position became a form of quietism or worse. But the emergence of "la nouvelle philosophie" demonstrates that he has yet to be refuted. As a result of the absence of a radical social theory which is also a philosophy of freedom, another generation of French intellectuals has found its manifesto of disillusionment, this time in *La Barbarie à visage humain*.

Tom Good

15. Raymond Barrillon, "Time for an Obituary?" *Manchester Guardian Weekly, Le Monde*-English section (October 2, 1977). The emergence of a radical ecology movement is also undermining the Left in France (who in their right mind would vote for a Left which supports nuclear power and the nuclear deterrent?). Cf. Walter Schwarz, "Battle-scarred ecologists of France not despondent," *Manchester Guardian Weekly* (April 28, 1977).

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Douglas Kellner, ed. *Karl Korsch: Revolutionary Theory*. Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1977. 299 pages. $14.95.

The debate over the legacy of Karl Korsch continues, often at a level beneath criticism.[1] Unfortunately, a climate prevails in which scientistic dogmatists are opposed to "critical theorists" who, for their part, often dismiss the potential for praxis in the name of the "critical" method. In this context, Douglas Kellner's edition of Korsch's writings becomes a major contribution to the development of a critical Marxism in America.

The volume itself contains a lengthy introduction by Kellner, and six sections of Korsch essays along with a preface to each section.[2] Now, were Kellner's introduction not of the quality that it is, one would wish for more Korsch and less Kellner. As it is, however, one can only say that he wishes for more Korsch. In fact, it is probable that Kellner's careful and scholarly introduction will push most of the previous Korsch exegesis into the background. Though Kellner does not settle all the philosophical disputes, the value of his work lies in the manner by which he tirelessly explodes the variety of myths which have sprung up around Korsch's name—myths which range from his status as a martyr to the belief that he always stood on the "ultra-left." This latter myth is surely the most famous one, and it has been fostered by E.H. Carr among others. But Kellner shows beautifully how Korsch developed from a Fabian socialist to a supporter of Lenin's "21 Points," from a supporter of the "right Brandler faction of the KPD to an advocate of the "left" Fischer-Maslow bloc. Indeed, Kellner points out that Korsch was not always critical of the Soviet Union and that he even supported the initial Bolshevization of the KPD as well as the "social fascist" thesis.[3] Finally, Kellner demonstrates how, even when Korsch began his critique of the international communist movement, it was from a Leninist vantage-point[4] and that it

1. In this regard, see John Horton and Fari Filsoufi, "Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder in theory and Method" in *The Insurgent Sociologist* Vol. VII, No. 1 (Winter, 1977). This article which simply assumes the correctness of Lenin throughout -- without in the least bothering to demonstrate it -- and which carries on a diatribe against Korsch and Lukács from the most vulgar Althusserian position, is so completely theoretically flawed and has so many historical mistakes, that it would probably take an article double the length of the original to refute it thoroughly. This idiotic piece has already started a certain controversy, which is itself unfortunate since using this article as the basis of any discussion necessarily throws the participants back to a level which the left should already have surmounted.

2. Of course, the selection of articles for an anthology is always difficult and open to disagreement. Nevertheless, the selections from Korsch's writings included in the present volume are not always the best. Thus we do not see Korsch in action as a politician, which could have been remedied through the inclusion of a speech like "*Um die Arbeiterregierung*" or "*Proletarische Niederlagen, Proletarischer Sieg,*" the essay which discusses his reflections on the Fifth World Congress of the Third International. Even on the theoretical level, the omission of the "15 Theses on Scientific Socialism" is a serious one, as is the introduction to the *Kernpunkte der materialistischen Geschichtsauffassung*. Finally, the practical dimension of Korsch's thought, as it becomes manifest in the lectures he gave at the *Marxistische Arbeiterschule* and in his book *Arbeiterrechte für Betriebsräte*, does not receive enough attention. Also, the method of dating articles is inadequate and often leads to confusion.

3. From Kellner's discussion, a problem might emerge here for the uninitiated. The "social fascist" thesis of the early twenties -- which viewed all non-revolutionary parties as falling under this rubric -- was different from the "social fascist" thesis which Stalin employed to foster the line that the social democrats were "twin brothers" with the Nazis. The latter, of course, was used only after Korsch was expelled from the Party.

4 This is clearly brought out in Korsch's article "Lenin and the Comintern" which is included in the present collection.

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was only later, once he had been expelled from the Party, that Korsch took up the "ultra-left" stance for which he would gain his fame. By painstakingly reconstructing Korsch's political development, Kellner is able to dispose of the "Korsch myth."

But, though Kellner implicitly draws out the connection between Korsch's political theory and his rise and fall within the KPD,[5] Kellner realizes that a deeper reason behind Korsch's development can be found in the theoretical foundation of his thought—the concept which Kellner labels "revolutionary historicism." Kellner correctly places this quintessentially critical concept at the center of Korsch's entire political and theoretical enterprise. This is the concept which seeks to ground and ascertain the value of a particular theory in terms of the given state of the revolutionary class struggle and the needs which the struggle expresses at that particular time. The concept was always what served as Korsch's guide for praxis. Thus it was not the abstract "theoretical" superiority of Leninism which led Korsch to the Party, but rather the fact that Leninism was grounded and recognized by the masses in their revolutionary struggles insofar as it stood in opposition to a moribund social democracy. This is what made it valid for Korsch to support Leninism and even demand its revolutionary "restoration" during the period of the Third International's revolutionary decline.[6]

It is essential to note, however, that this basic concept was used by Marx himself—though he did not give it a label—in discussing various political and theoretical developments, as well as by Marxists such as Rosa Luxemburg and Lukács. But, although other Marxists grounded their thought and criticism in terms of revolutionary praxis, Korsch's innovation was that he applied this "revolutionary historicism" to the development of Marxism itself. This was precisely what Korsch meant when he said that he wished "to apply the materialist method of history to the materialist method of history itself."[7] Thus Korsch was able to formulate a critique of Marxism from within the theoretical construct of Marxism itself.

Indeed, from Kellner's analysis, it becomes clear that the positions taken by Leonardo Ceppa,[8] Piccone and others, are mistaken insofar as they believe that Korsch simply made a break with Marxism in his later years. Of course, it is true that Korsch became disgusted with the Stalinist brand of Marxism which had become predominant, and that in criticizing Stalinism he had to go back over Lenin to the writings of Marx and Engels. But the question remains, from what theoretical

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5. Korsch rose to the post of editor of the party organ *Die Internationale* and, as Kellner notes, was one of the first victims of Stalinist smear campaigns.

6. Thus Kellner is quite right in pointing out Korsch's opposition to "splitting" the proletarian movement. In this context the juxtaposition of Lukács' decision to remain in the party, in contrast to Korsch's high principled departure, is shown to be mistaken. Korsch was far to hard-headed not to realize that the Communists were the only left group in the twenties to have a real mass base, and he tried to remain in the Party as long as possible. In fact, as Henry Pachter -- a former student of Korsch's and himself a former KPD member -- informed me in conversation, even after Korsch himself was expelled from the party he urged Pachter to stay in as long as possible. Moreover, Korsch's own group made the formal decision in 1926-7 that all members must join some established labor organization.

7. Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy*, trans. Fred Halliday (London, 1970), p. 92.

8. Ceppa goes so far as to say that "few doubts remain as to Korsch's total rejection of the Marxian perspective." Leonardo Ceppa, "Korsch's Marxism" in *Telos* No. 26 (Winter, 1975-6), p. 118. The essence of Paul Piccone's position, and his attack on Korsch's "instrumentalism," emerges in his "Korsch in Spain" in *New German Critique* (Fall, 1975). Paul Breines puts Korsch in the camp of those who abandoned the Marxism in the "Internal Polemics" discussion in *Telos* No. 31 (Spring, 1977).

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perspective was Marxism criticized by Korsch? This is of central importance in that, as Kellner shows, Korsch never gave up the dialectical method or the critique of political economy. Furthermore, he never relinquished his demand for revolutionary action by the working class, the perception of the need for a centralization of the economy (which would go hand in hand with its decentralization in terms of workers' control), or the demand for a society in which democracy could be actualized in everyday life—and for Korsch this always meant socialism.

What becomes clear from Kellner's analysis is that immanent critique becomes a function of Marxism itself, once the radical principle of "revolutionary historicism" is recognized. For, and this becomes manifest in Korsch's own critique of Kautsky and the Second International, what results from a conception of Marxism as a set of "laws" from an "orthodox" perspective is that Marxism as a theory of revolution comes to stand beyond the historical process which it is to comprehend and transform. Any unity between theory and praxis must be destroyed once a theory which must be historically specific, insofar as it must respond to the needs of praxis in changing situations, becomes transhistorical through theoretical hypostatization.

In fact, one can even go further. From a Korschian perspective, *orthodoxy becomes inimical to Marxism.* At the same time, *the need to revise becomes inextricably bound to a theory which is to inform a revolutionary project.*[9] For, insofar as history is a process of development in which possibilities for revolutionary change, Marxism cannot remain as a fixed body, an unchanging object which calls forth neither reflection nor the intrusion of subjective praxis to actualize its predictions.

For Korsch, Marxism as a philosophy is fundamentally affected—and in this respect Marxism takes its place within the prior philosophical tradition—by the social and economic complex in which it determinately functions. On the other hand, what allows Marxism to break with philosophical tradition is that it can call the manner *in which it is functioning* into question from within its own construct. Thus, to take the position that Korsch's supposed "reduction" of theory to the class struggle in some mechanistic or instrumentalist fashion leads "to the absence of a real critique of ideology"[10] is not only mistaken, but misses the point of Korsch's entire enterprise. For, indeed, one of the themes which runs through all his writings is how Marxism is used and mis-used in order to legitimize given forms of social praxis and oppression. From Korsch's perspective, ideology does not simply float in the superstructural stratosphere as a complement to the given form of class struggle, but rather affects the struggle itself. This is why he can say that it is up to "modern dialectical materialism to grasp philosophies and other ideological systems in theory as realities and to treat them as such in praxis."[11]

What clearly concerns Korsch is not so much the critique of bourgeois ideology, but rather the manner in which bourgeois ideology has made inroads into Marxism and how Marxism itself has concealed certain theoretical contradictions which have effected its own development and stunted its growth. Thus, in his article *The*

9. This, of course, does not imply revisionism in Bernstein's sense. It is interesting to note, however, that Korsch saw Bernstein as historically correct in his attack on Marxism insofar as his was the theory which the SPD was in fact following in praxis. Bernstein's opponent Rosa Luxemburg, however, is viewed by Korsch as neglecting the praxis and debating with Bernstein on the level of theory. On this level, of course, Korsch would have agreed with her against Bernstein. See Korsch's "The Passing of Marxian Orthodoxy" in the present volume.

10. *Op. cit.*, Ceppa, p. 110.

11. Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy*, p. 64.

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Revolutionary Commune which is included in Kellner's volume, Korsch shows how Marx was led to support the Paris Commune from a political perspective due to political exigencies—even though the structure of the commune contradicted his own concerns for centralization. What Korsch sees as resulting from Marx's attempt to appropriate the Commune for his own purposes is a misinterpretation of its revolutionary importance. For the discussion is shifted from the socio-economic dimension, involving the self-management of the constituents of everyday life, to a political dimension that leads to a contradiction which has been carried along in an unresolved state in the development of Marxism: the simultaneous emphasis upon a "dictatorship of the proletariat" and the goal of a state which has "withered away." This contradiction leads to an over-emphasis upon the role of the state in Marxian revolutionary theory, a concern which has its roots in the Jacobin-Blanquist elements which have been absorbed in Marxism. The publication of this article in the period of the Spanish revolution makes Korsch's support of the anarchists comprehensible *from a Marxian perspective*, a position which is already foreshadowed in his articles "The Spanish Revolution" and "Economics and Politics in Revolutionary Spain" both of which are included in the anthology.[12]

A truly revolutionary Marxism must be non-dogmatic and historically specific. For Korsch, it does no good simply to isolate Marxism from other theories of revolution and damn everything else as one type of revisionism or another. Rather, it becomes essential for Marxism to extract and reintegrate the revolutionary impetus from within other theories in constructing a Marxism which will adequately meet the needs of differing proletariats. Thus, as Korsch points out in his discussion of the revolution in Spain: "In order to work out a realistic approach to the constructive work of the revolutionary proletariat in Catalonia and other parts of Spain, we must not confront its achievements either with some abstract ideal or with results attained under entirely different historical circumstances."[13]

Thus Korsch brings Marxism into contact with the historically concrete situation. Yet, is is precisely the "orthodox" Marxists who conform to abstract standards insofar as they freeze Marxism into a dogma. In doing so, however, they simultaneously become unable to deal with bourgeois elements within the theory—since Marxism equals "truth" by definition—or the changing revolutionary possibilities of the present. Thus, for example, when in Horton and Filsoufi's article attacking Korsch and Lukács, Marxism is defined as a science the possibility is not even entertained that—though Marxian "science" may differ from "bourgeois" science—a fetishization of the primacy which the bourgeoisie has put upon science may be taking place. Korsch, of course, recognized that the Marxian method was value-laden insofar as its purpose was to be the abolition of capitalism as a whole, that it could never deal with a set of constant variables and never provide for repetition since it must inform the proletariat in its changing situations.[14] The importance of this view becomes clear in

12. In this regard, see Henry Pachter, *Espana Crisol Politico* (Buenes Aires, 1969). Pachter wrote this history of the Spanish Civil War under the *nom de plume* Henri Rabassiere in the very late thirties, and it is one of the very few historical works written from a Korschian point of view.

13. Karl Korsch, "Economics and Politics in Revolutionary Spain" in *Revolutionary Theory*, p. 224.

14. Karl Korsch, *Karl Marx* (New York, 1963), p. 150.

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terms of Korsch's perception of the "crisis theory" which is once again becoming fashionable. In his essay "On Some Fundamental Presuppositions for a Materialistic Discussion of Crisis Theory," Korsch points out that theories which postulate the "iron logic" of capitalism's demise are pseudo-scientific, while theories of reformism which simply deny the continuation of crisis are not only incorrect but also turn socialism into a purely moral demand for changing the existent. Thus, for Korsch and Kellner, no exact prediction can be made for the crisis.[15] The consequence of this position, however, which Korsch presupposes and which Kellner does not bring out, is that revolutionary consciousness must always be prepared for *the eventuality of crisis*.

In fact, it was precisely this lack of preparedness which so adversely affected the rise of the workers' councils in that the workers were not ready to theoretically combat the co-optation of the councils by the unions and the parties, or to abolish the Kaiser's bureaucracy, legal system, military, etc. Furthermore, as Kellner correctly emphasizes, the councils were confused as to their own function and were thus unable to take control of both the economic and political realms and then fuse them.

Korsch's implicit demand for preparation, as well as the continuous emphasis upon the need for proletarian action and workers' councils, becomes a type of "anticipation" of the revolutionary enterprise. This would, however, somewhat contradict the position forwarded by Oskar Negt,[16] and more hesitatingly accepted by Kellner, that there is no "anticipatory" dimension in Korsch's thought which might retrieve the theory in non-revolutionary periods. The issue is an important one given the fact that, if Korsch's "revolutionary historicism" is viewed too narrowly, any theory becomes completely useless once it is separated from the actual class struggle. Now, there is no question but that a Blochian notion of "anticipatory consciousness" of "anticipatory movement" underlies the critique.[17] To be sure, though Korsch does make reference to the need for a "revolutionary fantasy" in his early writings and did come to be interested in the utopians later, he certainly did not elaborate an anticipatory theory in the manner of Bloch who sought to liberate the utopian potential contained in the

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15. Douglas Kellner, "Introduction" in *Revolutionary Theory*, p. 79.

16. This position emerges in Negt's excellent article, though one with which I have many disagreements, "Theory, Empiricism and Class Struggle: On the Problem of Constitution in Karl Korsch" in *Telos* No. 26. Another criticism of Korsch occurs in this article which is of importance. Negt terms this the "perceptible lack of theoretical sense for 'the differences of form' of economic relations (which) has far-reaching consequences" (pg. 134). Had Kellner included the *15 Theses on Scientific Socialism*, a discussion of this might have begun. In contrast to the "three-level" approach to reality offered by orthodox Marxists, Korsch has a completely different view. Roughly speaking, where certain sciences lie in *direct* immediate relation to material production, their relation to those means of production will necessarily be mechanistic. On the other hand, there are also sciences and processes which lie in *indirect*, mediated, relation to material production but which simultaneously lie in *direct*, unmediated relation to the production of social relations; these grow out of material production and in them material production itself extends—as in the case of the "culture industry." Finally, as with the fine arts for example, there are processes which do not lie in *direct* relation with either material production of with the *direct* production of social relations; instead, they only stand in direct relation with over-riding cultural production as such. Thus Korsch does achieve a certain differentiation of forms and, as is to be expected, all these inter-relations appear in qualitatively different combinations in differing stages of social production.

17. It is interesting that a similar disagreement between Negt, myself and Kellner, surfaces in regard to Bloch's thought. See: Oskar Negt, "Ernst Bloch -- The German Philosopher of the October Revolution" in *New German Critique 4* (Winter, 1975); Stephen Eric Bronner, "Revolutionary Anticipation andd Tradition" in *Minnesota Review* NS6 (Spring, 1976) and Douglas Kellner, Harry O'Hara, "Utopia and Marxism in Ernst Bloch" in *New German Critique 9* (Fall, 1976).

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past in terms of its "horizon" of possibility for the future—a furture which is to be built on the "axis" of the classless society.

No doubt, Korsch's theory must be filled out and deepened. Still, Korsch is involved in a very different project than is Bloch: the actual revolution—and not the elaboration of its utopian content—is what Korsch wishes to explore. Thus, his gaze is shifted to the concrete practice of revolution while the necessity of the revolution and its liberating potential is presupposed within his concerns. Consequently, anticipation—if one can use the word for Korsch—must be grounded in the concrete possibilities for action which the given presents and not simply transcend the present in the name of the future. Of course, there is a price which Korsch pays in that—since his emphasis is shifted to praxis—he can fall into a torpor when he asks how consciousness is to be directed towards the revolutionary goal. But then, this question receives no answer from Bloch either. What is missing in the line of argument pursued by Kellner and Negt is the differentiation—which must be drawn—between the elaboration of a theory of revolution and the proletariat's determinate will to revolt.

Though too much can be made of the personal depression which Korsch experienced in the late thirties, this depression is surely a function of his demand that the *anticipatory future be made present*[18] and the simultaneous impossibility of this demand being realized. Nevertheless Korsch continued to search for revolutionary possibilities within the existent, which led him to an investigation of the Third World, and for the reasons why this revolutionary action in Europe was not forthcoming, which is what led to the development of a theory of counterrevolution.

Surely one of Korsch's most important theoretical contributions is his concept of counterrevolution. The possibility of this counterrevolution had not been counted upon by "orthodox" Marxists and the political line of the KPD—"After Hitler, Us!—emerged as a consequence of this lack of theoretical preparedness. For Korsch, it will not do to discuss "betrayal" on the part of the Eberts, the Scheidemanns, the Mussolinis, or the Russian leaders, since "the fact of betrayal itself requires explanation."[19]

This concern lies at the basis of Korsch's *Ideologiekritik* and will lead him back to the very heart of Marxian theory. Kellner is quite correct, therefore, in pointing out how the hidden contradiction—between the demand for a "dictatorship of the proletariat" along with the demand for a "withering away of the state"—becomes part of the legitimation for a "two-stage" theory of the movement from socialism to communism. It is this two-stage theory which can indefinitely postpone the construction of the "higher" stage as it justifies the oppression which can theoretically be argued is necessary to achieve it. For Korsch, there can be little question that the failure to resolve such issues contributed to the theoretical failure of Second

18. Korsch's depression at the lack of a prospect for proletarian revolt led him to a position in which he deflated the qualitative differences between the U.S. and Nazi Germany, and advised the proletariat to put no faith in either party to the conflict since neither expressed their real class needs. See: Karl Korsch, "Fascism and Counterrevolution" in *Revolutionary Theory*. This position shows the worst excesses of ultra-leftism and contradicts Korsch's own demands for "specificity." The dialectic is left at just that level of generality wherein it becomes reified and useless. Even Bordiga, certainly not one to be overly careful in his own analyses, objected to this position. See: "Brief von Amadeo Bordiga and Karl Korsch" in *Ueber Karl Korsch* edited by Claudio Pozzoli (Frankfurt, 1973), pp. 243-7. This depression also accounted for occasional shifts in his views of the Soviet Union, views of hope which soon passed. See his letter to Brecht of April 18, 1947 in *Revolutionary Theory*.

19. Karl Korsch, "The Revolutionary Commune," p. 201.

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International social democracy and also helped prevent the construction of a Marxist theory of counterrevolution to deal with European fascism and Stalinism. From Korsch's standpoint, it was precisely the belief in "historical laws" regarding the "inevitable" victory of the proletariat which led to a political and theoretical position wherein counterrevolutionary moments in the historical process could be seen as "abnormal" moments in an otherwise progressive development. Thus Kellner can rightly show how Korsch viewed this theoretical perspective as based upon bourgeois remnants with Marxian theory such as "nineteenth century bourgeois concepts of progress and an amelioristic eveolutionary view of history."[20]

The basis of Korsch's attack, however, already appeared in *Marxism and Philosophy*. For the only way in which Marxism can gain "specificity" is through a process of totalization wherein the given relations of social interaction, and the possibilities for change, can be crystallized in a heuristic category through which the proletariat may perceive itself in its particular and determinate situation. The construction and reconstruction of this totality is fundamentally historical insofar as its over-riding determinations arise from the poerception of labor relationships which, in turn, determine the other mediations within the whole. As soon as one attributes an autonomous character to *any single facet* of the social totality—be it "historical laws," theory, economics, or "science"[21]—an ideological hypostatization results which will affect praxis.

In Korsch's theory, the totality is simultaneously "open" and reflexive insofar as it is organized through a "revolutionary critique" of the changing historical reality and its structures. Once critique, totalization, and the subjective factor in reconstructing theory and praxis, are dismissed the force of Marxian theory is dissipated. For with Kautsky, Stalin and other Marxists of the "orthodox" variety, the dialectic is truncated. What occurs with these thinkers is that they "universally transfer the dialectic into Object, Nature and History and they present knowledge merely as the passive mirror and reflection of this objective Being in the subjective Consciousness. In so doing they destroy both the dialectical interrelation of *being and consciousness* and, as a necessary consequence, the dialectical interrelation of theory and practice."[22]

This is as trenchant a critique of copy theory and objectivism as is to be found in Marxian literature. The importance for Korsch's theory of the counterrevolution is that, when the dissociation between economic events and their ideological context occurs, new social structures can only be viewed in the light of categories of the past which are then imposed upon the present. Thus, Korsch can view both fascism and the counterrevolution in Russia as part of a new worldwide movement of reaction which involves a setback for the entire working class. At the same time, the split between theory and praxis becomes the ideological underpinning for this Stalinist counterrevolution. For, as soon as the split is made between the latent revolutionary possibilities of objective socio-economic development and the necessity for deepening the ideological need for revolutionary activity in order to bring the new socialist society

20. Kellner, *op.cit.*, p. 88.

21. Though scientific changes do arise out of changing socio-historical formations, this is not the same as saying that Marxism has the last word in terms of the specific results achieved. Korsch warns against such vulgar misuse of Marxism has the last word in terms of the specific results achieved. Korsch warns against such vulgar misuse of Marxism—which can lead to nonsense like the "dialectics of wheat"—in his *Kernpunkte der materialistischen Geschichtauffassung: Eine quellenmässige Darstellung* (Hamburg, 1973).

22. Karl Korsch, Marxism and Philosophy, p. 117.

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into existence, the actions of the present receive sanction.

For Korsch, the unity between theory and praxis is at the base of the Marxian revolutionary project which itself seeks a critique of the existent in order to determine the immediate possibilities for workers taking control of both production and distribution. The theory thus becomes oppositional by its very nature.

Though Kellner is quite right in pointing to Korsch's position in the late thirties and fourties when the possibilities for working class action appeared non-existent, and when Stalin had turned Marxism into an ideology of legitimation, unfortunately he does not discuss the essential theoretical questions involved: *how can an oppositionalist theory serve to demand its concrete actualization?* And then too, *how can a theory based on critique serve to legitimize any regime in power?*

Without revolutionary action on the part of the masses, these questions must come to the fore. Korsch's greatness, as well as his failure, as a theorist occurs precisely because his thought simultaneously demands answers to these questions and grinds to a halt in the face of them. The limit of Korsch's thought thus reflects the fact that, in the period of counterrevolution, the proletariat no longer has any forces with which it can identify itself and which will support its real interests. This is not to say, however, that answers to these questions, resolutions to these contradictions, become irrelevant for the contemporary left. On the contrary, precisely because of the situation in which the left finds itself, these questions assume a new importance.[23]

Korsch's strength lay in the fact that he continued to confront these questions, although the insecurity of his position in the forties and his debilitating illness in the fifties would prevent him from answering them. Indeed, the attempt to resolve these issues led him to an analysis of other revolutionary theories like those of Bakunin.[24]

In contrast, however, much of what has come to be called "critical theory" has shied away from coming to terms with the issues that Korsch exposed. Thus, though Kellner is correct in linking the despair which Korsch experienced to the predicament in which Frankfurt School thinkers found themselves,[25] there is a fundamental philosophical difference between critical theory as it has developed and Korsch's critical Marxism. This becomes particularly clear if one contrasts Korsch to Adorno, and this type of contrast assumes a basic importance if modern critical theory is to decide what direction it is to take.

For Adorno—and especially in his later work—the dialectic is seen solely in terms of necessity, while the actual negation of necessity is seen as standing beyond the dialectic's own movement. As soon as a negation manifests itself in its positivity, the freedom of negativity is immediately constrained by the force of its very actualization. This is the basic reasoning behind Adorno's criticism of Hegel's "negation of the

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23. Kellner only alludes to Korsch's statement that "there is something odd about 'the ideological character of this wholescale identification of an established doctrine with the revolutionary struggles of the working class' " (p. 82). The real issue here is the purpose of councils, and the fact that consistent self-critique must enter into the very legitimation for control. The theoretical line of development begins with Luxemburg, moves to Korsch, Lukács and Gramsci, and extends to Negt and Rudi Dutschke. It is also interesting that this notion serves to explode the utopian ideas of vulgar Marxists who see some type of boring, divine harmony at the end of "pre-history." Once critique enters the very telos of Marxism, a very different vision results.

24. See Korsch's "10 Theses on Marxism Today" and Kellner's discussion in the present volume.

25. *Op. Cit.*, Kellner, p. 91. For a fuller discussion of Kellner's views on the Frankfurt School, see his review of Martin Jay's *The Dialectical Imagination* (Boston, 1973) in *New German Critique* 4 (Winter, 1975).

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negation," and his own concept of a "negative dialectic."[26] Forever denied actualization, except perhaps by those works of art that remove themselves from positivity and cultural integration by their very abstractness,[27] Adorno's negation is forever denied any determinancy. Truly this brings to mind Schiller's *"Freiheit in dem Reich der Träume;"* for Adorno, only in the particular subject that is irreducible to the universal, can the traces of this negative capacity—which maintains the spontaneity of freedom—occur. Thus Adorno's negation remains a fundamentally formalist notion, beyond—or preserved from—the actual movement of historical necessity. For Hegel and Marx, it is precisely the perception of necessity that determines the specific historical content that a negation contains. What occurs with Adorno is that, though it is precisely ontological formalism that he wishes to attack, his own thought becomes chained to just this sort of ontology. The inability of the negation to actualize itself, to negate in praxis, along with its de-historicization results in practical consequences. The "autonomy" of theory and its divorce from praxis easily lead to a position in which revolutionary praxis can be dismissed outright since this praxis can never be "informed" enough. Once the actual *activity of negating* is turned into a *negation*—which is denied concreteness through the stabilized hegemony of the existent[28]—praxis becomes entirely relativistic, while the belief in the "autonomy" of theory becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy insofar as no praxis will be able to actualize what is non-realizable by definition. What alone might matter to this elusive negation —which truly perceives "the night in which all cows are black"—would be an apocalypse. But since this is impossible, what actually results is either passivity or reformism—along with the cynical snigger that would allow the theorist to continue to believe that this reformism is insufficient.[29]

The emphasis on the individual, on the notion of freedom being freedom for a particular subject, is laudable. Nevertheless, for all of Adorno's contributions to cultural criticism, what results is a social theory that retreats from the actual, concrete, political problems that Korsch's theory raises. The demand for emancipation gives up searching within the existent for the potential that will actualize it. In contrast, for both Marx and Korsch, the struggle against ideological mystification and social oppression is formulated upon the notion of *Diesseitigkeit;* the "this-sidedness" or conreteness that must be manifested in an uncovery and attack upon repression.

It is on the basis of this concept that Korsch's historicism is grounded. For, just as materialism itself originally grew out of the critique of religion, so too must the mystification of capitalist ideology and production relations—the most progressive aspects of which cannot be actualized within capitalist society and the most reactionary of which simply serve to veil the functioning of the given order—be criticized in a concrete social manner and in terms of the concrete alternative of workers'

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26. Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics* trans. E.B. Ashton (New York, 1973), pp. 135-161.

27. In this regard, see Adorno's briliant essay "Versuch das Endspiel zu verstehen" in *Noten zur Literatur II* (Frankfurt-Main, 1961).

28. The highly influential "Culture Industry" essay is of basic imortance in this respect. See, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* trans. John Cumming (New York, 1972).

29. Precisely because of their philosophical constructs, it is not *ad hominem* to point to the unfortunate positions which Adorno, Horkheimer and other Frankfurt School thinkers took *vis-a-vis* the events of 1968. Of course, Marcuse's role was very different.

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control that is, after all, the basis of emancipatory socialism. Thus, as Kellner notes, Korsch saw his brand of socialism as a "practical socialism"—*but always "practical" in terms of a revolution that is yet to be achieved.*

This, then, is the problem complex that defines the boundaries within which the elaboration of Korsch's Marxism must proceed. This may mean critically utilizing other strains from the revolutionary tradition, but it certainly does not mean settling for an abstract negation. For Korsch, *negation* was never abstract or passive, but rather always implied the *activity* through which a class—informed by theory—constitutes itself as a negation, while the method itself defines its concreteness. Thus, Korsch does not simply flee from the overwhelming effects of the counterrevolution, but continues *to search for an alternative.* This search is what brands the direction which his thinking will take up to his final illness, for Korsch always maintained that the intellectual attempt to formulate theory becomes a moment of political praxis—even if that praxis has not yet come to fruition. If this is the case, however, "anticipation" is implicitly assumed—albeit that it is not formulated in a systematic or meta-theoretical manner—while the elaboration of a viable alternative comes to involve an ideological struggle against both the bourgeoisie and the supporters of a degenerate Marxism. What this demands is nothing other than a Marxism that returns to its most radical and materialist roots; that is to say, a return to the position that the social causes of an issue must always be explicated in terms of the concrete requirements for its solution.[30]

Consequently, Korsch is not interested in abstractly debating Marxist gospel; instead, he is concerned with utilizing the method in order to explicate prevailing social conditions.[31] Though Korsch was isolated from practical politics after his expulsion from the KPD,[32] he understood from the start that the tiny Bordighist and Trotskyist sects posed no real alternative to the tiny counterrevolution. Korsch could only seek for unity among those left non-CP groups, who were themselves enmeshed in often turgid doctrinal disputes that seemed to assume greater and greater importance the further that these sects were removed from power.

Unfortunately, Kellner does not really discuss the possible implications that Korsch's position *vis-à-vis* Trotskyists and other sects might have for the present. There can be no question that, in Korsch's time, the central issue remained the Soviet Union. Trotsky saw it as a "revolution betrayed" and as a "degenerate workers' state," while

30. This can and must be carried out in terms of a dialectical specificity which perceives the particular problem in terms of the tendencies in the existent for its solution. Insofar as socialism is not beyond the bounds of such a critique—at least to the extent that the expropriation of surplus value, alienated labor and repression have not been attenuated and there has been no "leap" into the realm of freedom from that of necessity—the reflexivity of the dialectic and the need of necessity—the reflexivity of the dialectic and the need for the concrete negation continue to play a role.

31. *Op. Cit.*, Negt, p. 130.

32. After Korsch's expulsion from the KPD, he was essentially isolated though he had close relations, gave instructions, and wrote editorials for some dissident trade unions --notably in the construction and metal industries -- where the influence of Richard Müller continued. His own group consisted mainly of intellectuals. Interestingly enough, Korsch exerted his strongest influences in areas where workers' movements were quite weak, such as in India and Japan, even though he did have contacts with Bordiga, Henriette Roland-Holst, Lucien Laurat, the editor of *La Revolution Prolétarienne*, Pannekoek and Sapronov. The anarcho-syndicalist strain became ever more central to his thought, if only because the KDPD ever more gradually monopolized the organizational apparatus of the left. In fact, at the time of his death, Korsch was working on a biography of Bakunin.

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others viewed the Soviet Union as "state capitalist." This issue has caused the fiercest argument and division down to the present. Yet Korsch himself, while clearly coming out for a "second revolution" in the USSR, often used the two terms interchangeably—and it gives one pause to reflect. For the difference between the two terms may well be of no more than academic interest once the concept of counterrevolution is taken into account. Clearly, Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed* does not use the concept of counterrevolution for the Soviet Union. Instead, the counterrevolution concept is reserved for the West while the Soviet Union is seen as having undergone a political-bureaucratic degeneration—despite the fact that "property relations" have remained "socialist." These "property relations" were to be maintained, which therefore involved a defense of the Soviet Union against the counterrevolution that was sweeping the West and even a retention of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. To be sure, Trotsky believed that a radical change was necessary—but only in the political realm, since the socio-economic realm was already a privileged socialist form.

From a Korschian perspective, however, this distinction becomes useless. The distinction between a "political" solution and a social transformation becomes arbitrary and worthless insofar as any *mass praxis* will necessarily break down the formalist distinction; thus, for example, Trotsky's positing of bureaucracy as a political—not a socio-economic—phenomenon becomes invalid once it is seen that the abolition of bureaucracy inherently takes shape in social terms, since the workers must assume control of the means of production. If the distinction, however, is no longer valid—and the Soviet Union is seen as part of the counterrevolution—then clearly its "defense" does not assume the primacy that it was given by Trotsky while the dictatorship of the proletariat—and not only under Stalinist administration—loses its validity as well.[33]

From Korsch's view, this type of formalistic argumentation involves a mystification whose *practical effects* lead to a legitimation of both Soviet foreign policy and the dictatorship of the proletariat with its oppression, Korsch already saw the consequences of the contradiction between the demand for decentralization and the dictatorship of the proletariat in his article *The Revolutionary Commune*. More important, however, is that Korsch realizes that the split between the political and the economic is itself a fundamental form of alienation that affects the system as a whole; indeed, it is precisely this split that the council system is to overcome. Thus the attack upon bureaucracy, bonapartism, and repression must involve the realization that socialism is a system of emancipation for the social whole, which cannot be mechanistically compartmentalized.

The actual changes within both the Soviet Union with its Marxism that legitimizes the *status quo* and the capitalist countries with their new forms of ideological integration only make clear the need for new forms of political organization among the oppressed. Yet the goal remains fundamentally Marxist insofar as the basis for the new society—the abolition of alienated labor,[34] the law of value and the creation of a classless society that is fundamentally democratic—is still to be achieved. It becomes

33. This is not to say that the Soviet Union is to be opposed on principle either. Rather, a decision involves a practical issue by issue analysis based on the tendencies for proletarian liberation within the existing situation.

34. All this can be swept under the carpet with the introduction of the notion of "non-antagonistic contradictions." This Stalinist-Maoist concept draws the distinction between contradictions which must be reconciled in a socialist society and those which can be left as they are. The party, of course, makes the decision. Naturally, the very concept of non-antagonistic contradiction in dialectical thought is nothing but a contradiction in terms.

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incumbent upon a revolutionary critical theory and praxis to relate these goals to the specific situation of the actual workers who are in direct relation to the means of production. This non-dogmatic, liberating Marxism is surely what contributed to Korsch's popularity in the 1960s among students and young left workers. For, from his exposition of Marxism, not only does a legitimizing Marxism lose its pre-eminence, but it becomes possible to question immanently the entire notion of a "vanguard" from a materialist-revolutionary standpoint. From Korsch's position, it is easy to argue that in the period of advanced capitalism—what with the advances in technology, communications and mass media, as well as other capitalist forms of social integration—the preconditions that made for the viability of a vanguard party in Russia and China no longer exist, and that the attempts to trans-historically transfer these notions onto the present phase of development are condemned to failure. In fact, it is true that the thrust of Korsch's theory may well call his own belief in the mission of the proletariat into question, and moreover necessitate new analyses of the working class in its changing composition. Even the old forms that the councils took must be re-evaluated. But, once again, what this impies is that Marxism become critical and explore new categories and new possibilities for action.

What emerges from Korsch is a demand for the transformation of the totality, which means quite simply that the ideological, cultural, political and economic dimensions must be unified in the revolutionary project. In this respect, Korsch's *oeuvre* leads to '68 and, along with the European students and workers, he always maintained that this transformation could not be proclaimed by anyone other than the masses themselves. As Rosa Luxemburg once said, "socialism cannot be made by decree"—and this holds for Korsch as well. Thus it follows, for Korsch, that revolutionary praxis cannot be framed or proclaimed from without, but rather that it must equal mass praxis. This praxis must arise from the consciousness of necessity within the oppressed themselves, and it is up to the 'critical' theorist to expose, clarify, and project it. No matter how 'radical' the pretension, once this need is allowed to slide, the rejection of true revolutionary theory and the validity of reformist practice justify themselves in a circular manner. Insofar as the potential for revolution is dismissed, the present is legitimated. At the same time, as praxis-oriented theory becomes that much more irrelevant for the 'theorist,' alternative forms of organization become that much more adventurist. Underlying it all is a pessimism that may well grant more strength to the existent than it actually possesses. In this way, the preconditions for the construction of such 'radical' views become precisely the preconditions for their sterility.

From the very essence of Korsch's conception, revolutionary struggle must remain at the center of truly radical theory. Moreover, it becomes clear that there is not only one adequate form of socialist organization nor one immutable theory that will forever inform that organization in terms of what it opposes and what it supports. The dialectical, critical, reflexive, revolutionary, concrete and historical elements for social and political analysis are precisely what give Marxism its resiliency and what open it to the comprehension of new possibilities. Without the conscious perception and application of these components, there is no chance for revitalizing Marxism. In short, from Korsch it becomes clear that only by becoming critical once more will Marxism assert its radical character.

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Hans-Georg Gadamer. *Truth and Method.* Trans. Garrett Barden and John Cumming. New York: Seabury, 1975. 551 pages. $22.50.
—. *Philosophical Hermeneutics.* Trans. and edited by David E. Linge. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976. 301 pages. $3.95 paper.
—. *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies.* Trans. P. Christopher Smith. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976. 118 pages. $10.00.

The "conflict of interpretations" among students of social thought is alive as ever, and perhaps as a consequence, many who had earlier dispensed with hermeneutics (often associated only with Dilthey) are giving it a second look. Because it goes without saying, "it" is seldom said: improvements in theory derive first of all from adequate appreciation of earlier achievements. To this simple end, clarification of meaning in textual material, Hans-Georg Gadamer has given the last several decades.

The first edition of his *Wahrheit und Methode* appeared in 1960, the culmination of "hermeneutic praxis during a quarter century of academic activity,".[1] when Gadamer was 60 years old. He had been a student of Heidegger both literally and spiritually for most of his life, and had given himself with some care to the rigors of adequate interpretation of artistic and philosophic texts. Therefore the Diltheyan hermeneutical task of making available to social "science" a battery of reliable interpretational "methods" had not been taken up by Gadamer, but rather by his theoretical opponent, Emilio Betti (whose gigantic main work is not yet in English[2]). Gadamer's magnum opus, finally made accessible to English readers in 1975, actively opposed Betti's search for analytic or interpretive "tools," and instead concerned itself, among other things, with the ontology of language—the *Sprachlichkeit* ("linguisticality") of human existence.

Truth and Method is three books in one. The first addresses several problems: evolution of the concept of "the aesthetic sphere," and the deleterious effect this has had on understanding the truth-value of art; Kant's aesthetic theory and the Romantic doctrine growing from it on the "aesthetics of genius;" and the "ontology of the work of art" with discussion of its relation to "play."[3]

The second "volume" is an analytical history of hermeneutics since the Greeks, with particular attention to Dilthey and Heidegger.[4] The most important section of this part

1. Hans-Georg Gadamer, "The Problem of Historical Consciousness," Introduction, *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* (New School for Social Research), 5:1, Fall, 1975, p. 2.
2. *Allgemeine Auslegungslehre als Methodik der Geisteswissenschaften* (Tübingen, 1967), 711 pp.
3. It might be noted that one critical axis around which Gadamer's theoretical edifice turns, and concerning which, Habermas displays little interest or explanatory skill, is the realm of art and aesthetics. In his unabated effort to interpret and transcend "distortions" endemic to late capitalist society, Habermas has deprived his theory and metatheory of important elements by mistakenly evading or minimizing the liberating quality of art, an error Marcuse and Adorno never made. If the latter have justifiably been chided for neglecting in their analyses both the structural constraints *and* avenues of potential liberation common to industrial civilization, they nevertheless profited critical theory by always keeping in sight the "emancipatory" impulse of aesthetic consciousness and creation. And it seems that the history of culture gives more credence to their conviction in this regard (borrowed from Schiller) than to Habermas' unlikely imputation of societal emancipation to the psychoanalytic model, even in "ideal" terms.
4. The best brief prehistory of the field was compiled by Dilthey himself. See "The Development of Hermeneutics," *W. Dilthey: Selected Writings*, ed. trans., and intro. by H.P. Richman (New York, 1976), pp. 246-68.

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is "Foundation of a Theory of Hermeneutical Experience," Gadamer's original contribution to the field. Finally, the third section provides a study of the "ontology" of language—the revelation of Being through linguisticality—with special reference to the effect this has on the actual practice of hermeneutics. If we isolate those aspects of his very lengthy argument in favor of the strict *opposition* between the discovery of truth and the objectifying debilitation of method *per se*, we ought first to expose several, as it were, "stylistic" or semantic difficulties which have impeded appreciation of the theory at large. These unhappy modes of expressions have received undue critical response, while other, much more significant passages, have escaped comment.

Gadamer has often been charged with theoretical, therefore political, conservatism because of his strenuous efforts to "rehabilitate authority and tradition." One of his continuous complaints (unlike those of Horkheimer and Adorno) is that our theoretical heritage in natural and social science owes too much to that part of Enlightenment ideology which categorically denigrates "authority"—even that which has nothing to do with stratification and power relations, but which grows from the normal cumulation of knowledge and experience—and, along with it, "tradition." From Dilthey and Schleiermacher, Gadamer insists that this view makes more sense as a plank in a revolutionary program with concrete political ambitions than as a guide to interpretation for the proper uses of what has preceded.

Another claim contra Gadamer, stemming from the belief that he masks reactionary sentiments with phenomenological-linguistic wizardry, originates in his assault on the "democratization of culture" when it devalues idiosyncratic or virtuosic abilities in theorists or exegetes. Critiques of raw empiricism are legion and by now something of a bore, yet Gadamer enlarges them. In demanding that "the basic experiences" of research "can be repeated by anyone," the result is that "no place can be left for the historicality of [individual] experience" (p. 311). While his choice of phrase in this matter is hardly aimed at finding him supporters among the left, it remains to be seen whether or not his conceptions are merely distasteful or truly incorrect: "In the Early tradition of hermeneutics, which the historical selfconsciousness of post-Romantic scientific method completely forgot, this problem has its systematic place. Hermeneutics was divided up in the following way: a distinction was made between *subtilitas intelligendi* (understanding) and *subtilitas explicandi* (interpretation). Pietism added a third element, *subtilitas applicandi* (application), as in J.J. Rambach. The act of understanding was regarded as made up of these three elements. It is notable that all three are called *subtilitas*, i.e., they are not considered so much methods that we have at our disposal as a talent that requires particular finesse of mind" (p. 274). Gadamer, then, repudiates "method" or "procedure" in interpretive work, and goes far beyond Dilthey's "categories of life" as the ground of the *Geisteswissenschaften* as well as the Aristotelian naturalism of Comte and later positivists. For Gadamer it is fruitless to think that we occupants of *Dasein*, "participants in Being" as exposed by language, can escape our condition even momentarily, stand outside ourselves from some "objective position," and analyze not only physical reality but the events and productions of our own consciousness. ("Historical objectivism, in appealing to its critical method, conceals the involvement of the historical consciousness itself in effective-history," p. 268.)

Gadamer's sense of the mutuality of ontology and interpretation is complex, subtle, and based on intimate knowledge of social science, philosophy, philology, and hermeneutics, plus the aforementioned collegial understanding of the dilemma of "demythologized" theology. This combination of knowledge makes *Truth and Method*

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difficult to follow at times (like many European texts, it is under-referenced), but also explains its uncommon value to those interested in the interpretive problems of social science and the perennial quest for cumulative continuity in the development of theory. Yet, the problems associated with his hermeneutical scheme (those mentioned most often are the "hermeneutical circle," the nature of "effective-history" or "consciousness in which history is ever at work," plus his presumed "conservatism") are best addressed—and for the most part neutralized—through examination of his own claims. "Understanding begins...when something addresses us. This is the primary hermeneutical condition...It is the task of hermeneutics to clarify the miracle of understanding, which is not a mysterious communion of souls as one might expect having read Schleiermacher or even Dilthey, but a sharing of common meaning...the task of hermeneutics is always to establish agreement where it has failed to come about or has been disturbed in some way" (pp. 266, 260).

From Heidegger, Gadamer borrows the idea that the hermeneutical circle (an important part of "understanding" even before Schleiermacher) is not circular (i.e., tautological) in a "methodological" sense, but instead "describes an ontological structural element in understanding" (p. 261). Although it may indeed be true that "the understanding of the text remains permenently determined by the anticipatory movement of foreunderstanding" (p. 261), it was hardly necessary for Gadamer to deal with the problematic circle in order to communicate his version of interpretation successfully. In fact, at points in the books it is not completely clear that reliance upon *Sein und Zeit* is well-advised: "Understanding is the...original form of the realization of There-being, which is being-in-the-world...The present work is devoted to this new aspect of the hermeneutical problem. In reviving the question of being and thus moving beyond all previous metaphysics...Heidegger attained a fundamentally new position in regard to the impasses of historicism. The concept of understanding is no longer a methodological concept, as with Droysen. Nor, as in Dilthey's attempt to provide a hermeneutical ground for the human sciences, is the process of understanding an inverse operation that simply follows behind life's tendency towards ideality. Understanding is the original character of the being of human life itself" (p. 239). If this be true, why is it that the *raison d'être* of hermeneutics—rectification and prevention of distortion and misunderstanding—is so robust, has so much to do? If "understanding" is ontologically "prearranged" as a function of being, is it so shoddily prepared that misunderstanding inevitably rears its head, or is it that all the various "understandings" remain constitutionally incapable of harmonic relations? And is then hermeneutics' responsibility to join discordant voices? Even a careful reading leaves this issue undecided.

The first two-thirds of the Second Part provide us with the following program: (1) we are to seek in a work the "opening of being" portrayed in it; (2) we are to "listen" to the work, not squeeze its content into the frameworks given us by our accidental contemporaneity; (3) we are to be alive to the nature of *Dasein* expressed in the work, while not expecting to relive the creative experience of the author (Schleiermacher) or categorize the expressive statement with reference to "life" (Dilthey); (4) and we are to wait upon the language of the text, not rearrange it to fit the immediate shape of terminology and linguistic form as it shapes our own thought. As justification for these demands, Gadamer offers these sentiments: "Historical consciousness is aware of its own otherness and hence distinguishes the horizon of tradition from its own. On the other hand, it is itself...only something laid over a continuing tradition, and hence it immediately recombines what it has distinguished in order, in the unity of the historical

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horizon that it thus acquires, to become again one with itself.

"The projecting of the historical horizon, then, is only a phase in the process of understanding, and does not become solidified into the self-alienation of a past consciousness, but is overtaken by our own present horizon of understanding. In the process of understanding there takes place a real *fusing of horizons*, which means that as the historical horizon is projected, it is simultaneously removed. We described the conscious act of this fusion as the task of the effective-historical consciousness. Although this task had been obscured by aesthetic historical positivism in the train of Romantic hermeneutics, it is, in fact, the central problem of hermeneutics. It is the problem of application that exists in all understanding" (pp. 273-74). There is material here to spark pages of commentary and debate. But instead of meticulous probing, we may consider the *Weltanschauung* to which Gadamer has given loud voice. Just as Heidegger claimed that Western philosophy after Augustine had forgotten to ask about the nature of being, Gadamer claims that social science has forgotten the "art" of asking questions of its documents, of interpreting the "alien" voices that came before. In his predominant concern that careful "openness" direct our examination of texts, he at times appears to assume the stereotypical Oriental disposition before the sacred. Were Gadamer not so keenly attuned to the nature and demands of contemporary thought, his fascination with and commendation of the place of tradition, authority, language, as it "stands" as testimony of former being, and so on, might be considered support for those reactionary voices who long for a return to an imagined *Gemeinschaft*, and the form of intellectuality thought to have existed within it. But as he says, "Primeval wisdom is only the counter-image of 'primeval stupidity' " (p. 243). The point of Gadamer's hermeneutics is not to call us "back" to anything, but rather to open eyes half-closed with the bogus self-assurance that comes from awe before contemporary "method." Gadamer's latent Orientalism—the impulse to sit patiently before an object of study, forcing oneself to attain the proper attitude before dissection begins—is not, however, a posture of obeisance: "authority has nothing to do with obediance, but rather with knowledge" (p. 248).

Gadamer is willing to agree that we may objectify for the purposes of analyzing the "essential unintelligibility" of physical reality. But human consciousness the *Urteilung* or *Ur-Ich*, persists and interacts with itself even as it struggles to understand its own processes. It will not rest in repose in the "objective" position, while the researcher "rationally" disassembles it. There is no place external to being from which to attain Olympian objectivity. "Meaning that is generally accessible through reason is so little believed that the whole of the past, even, ultimately, all the thinking of one's contemporaries, is seen only 'historically' " (p. 244). All of this can be understood as Gadamer's dissatisfaction with what have been called "rape theories of interpretation." Even if the Third Part of *Truth and Method* is ignored, given over as it is to the unique hermeneutical ontology Gadamer grafts onto phenomenology, the previous two parts demonstrate the author's remarkable sensitivity to the historical quality of knowledge and existence, the connecton between language and meaning, and the unholy rigor that must be brought to interpretation. This alone should earn him a reading. And if his accusations against our theoretical and analytic dependency upon the Enlightenment chafe a bit—against even our emotional reliance upon the apotheosis of reason and the felt dissective prowess growing from it—it probably reflects more our *political* revulsion against totalitarianism of whatever style than what might be viewed as the intellectually unsatisfactory program he offers as a hermeneutics.

Philosophical Hermeneutics is a needed supplement to Gadamer's magnum opus. In

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it are thirteen essays written between 1960 and 1972 selected from the three-volume *Kleine Schriften*. Without this book one is at a loss to follow the Gadamer-Habermas debate, for Habermas refers constantly—and with much more precision than to *Truth and Method*—to "The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem" (1966). This essay, at least as interpreted by critical theorists, makes the claim that hermeneutical understanding, due to the nature of linguisticality, occupies a central position in all cognitive enterprise, not only in matters of method. Gadamer points out that the "truth-claim" of art always precedes "aesthetic consciousness" (an argument worked out at length in *Truth and Method*, First Part), just as "hermeneutical consciousness," which puts an end to the "epistemological truncation" of Romantic hermeneutics, precedes "methodological alienation." Again we read that "it is our prejudices that constitute our being," and that "imagination is the decisive function of the scholar." This essay is the best brief introduction to Gadamer's thought.

Another important article, "On the Scope and Function of Hermeneutical Reflection" (1967), also holds a central position in the skirmish between critical theory and hermeneutics. It was part of the Apel collection, but appeared there as "*Rhetorik, Hermeneutik, und Ideologiekritik*," and received much of Habermas' attention. In addition the book includes treatments of self-understanding, linguisticality, aesthetics, and a half-dozen articles given over entirely to phenomenology and Heidegger. In addition, Linge's 50-page introduction is helpful and free of the sorts of interpretational defects and slights common to reviews of Gadamer's theory.

P. Christopher Smith in *Hegel's Dialectic* has translated five essays on Hegel which Gadamer composed in the 1960s, and which have been published together in German only recently. These are virtuoso showpieces. If anyone, after studying the second part of *Philosophical Hermeneutics* or the historical exegeses in *Truth and Method*, needs to be convinced of Gadamer's credentials as a consummate "hermeneut," study of these short essays ought to validate his abilities. In addition, he has mastered idealist philosophy and casts the dialectic as the central point of importance for all understanding. While his view of Hegel betrays a distinct perspective, it cannot be said that he allows his bias to distort gratuitously the content of what we more commonly know to be Hegel's ideas. It is not necessary to study these essays in order to learn Gadamer's conception of hermeneutic understanding. But profit lies in reading them for other reasons: to gain a more buoyant understanding of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, and to see a master philologist-philosopher at work.

Finally a note about style: if some European theorists' prose, especially in translation, displays all the fluidity and grace of molten macadam, Gadamer's spills out and rolls along like an overturned Martini. While this is not the place to make clear a connection between style and content, "form and function," it is apparent that Gadamer's sympathetic response to artfully written prose wins for him great benefits as he explicates his own theory.

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Stanley Diamond. *In Search of the Primitive: A Critique of Civilization.* New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1974.

In *Discovering the Present*, the critic Harold Rosenberg refers to a Surrealist map of the world drawn in 1929. In it the United States is omitted and Europe is diminished in size while Russia, Alaska, Mexico, Labrador, and the Easter Islands are each magnified. The map superimposes on the Westerner's internal chart of ethnocentric value of an unfamiliar geography highlighted by peoples in revolt and by the appealing otherness of both nature and the primitive. Such images speak of denied human possibilities, and they are called to mind when considering the experiential origins of anthropology and when reading Diamond's book.

An examination of the thirty years either side of 1900 will reveal an intensification in Europe of the older romantic search for what might be called the negative image of civilization. The affinities Freud finds between childhood, the primitive, and certain forms of psychopathology is only one expression of this highly civilized sifting through the refuse of our past. One finds an analogous sense of affinity among artists of this period, a fact testified to in the work of Kandinsky, Klee, Matisse and so many others. While these artists could visit the new ethnological museums, which appeared with great rapidity toward the peaking of the imperialist era in the 1880s and 1890s, others like Gauguin sought the primitive directly in what he called, in *Noa Noa*, his "return to health." At roughly this same time, the first wave of anthropologists enter the "field." They are conscious of themselves as professionals and far more ambivalently aware of the conditions of their own flight from civilization than were men like Gauguin. Malinowski might be seen as a representative instance. Beginning his research in New Guinea in September 1914, he immediately finds himself divided between exotic-erotic longings on the one hand and an ascetic and rationalistic consciousness on the other. It is the second Malinowski, the scholar, with whom we are probably familiar; the restless, questing Malinowski will only be found in his diary (*A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term*), somewhat typically held apart and almost forgotten by both Malinowski and his profession.

The autobiographical statement in anthropology reminds us, as Diamond says, that it is the "most alienated" and most alienating of all professions. Even the recent preoccupation with totalizing and affectively dissociated methods, culminating in structuralism, seems to be merely the latest and now perverted expression of the highly inflated regard anthropologists have traditionally had for the harmonious patterning of experience (cf. Robert Jay's essay in Dell Hymes, *Reinventing Anthropology*). In each instance, the search for the primitive, once conceptualized, mirrors the gross absence of experiential wholeness fostered by civilization. The object of Diamond's book is to recover the critical and visionary roots of this search as they are to be discovered in anthropology's historical development, in civilized consciousness, and in the primitive.

Diamond understands the search for the primitive as one primary means of discovering the "nature of human nature" or "a sense of the minimally human, a sense of what is essential to being human" (119). Intrinsic to the search is a critique of civilization; the search necessitates the critique in terms of the greater disalienation of the primitive and is itself grounded in the felt necessity for critique from the perspective of a life within civilization. Such a project "is not, and cannot be, a question of grafting primitive forms on civilized structures or, need it be said again, of

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'retreating' into the primitive past. It is not a question of regaining lost paradises or savage nobility, neither of which ever existed in the manner imputed to their authors..." (174-175). Rather the central problem of anthropology "is to help conceptualize contemporary forms that will reunite man with his past, reconcile the primitive with the civilized, making progress without distortion theoretically possible, or at least, enabling us to experience the qualities that primitive peoples routinely display" (175). Such a reconciliation involves a "revolt, a search for human possibilities" (89) and, later, an incorporation and "move beyond the limits of" the primitive (129). Diamond has in mind a "revolutionary transformation" of modern society "equal in scope and depth to that which initiated civilization about 5,000 years ago" (xv).

This argument is developed from several perspectives. Diamond examines the conditions behind the breach between the primitive and civilization or, to use the distinguishing category, between stateless and state societies. He outlines an inductive model of the primitive way of being in the world in opposition to the civilized way. Aspects of this model are developed in more detail in studies of Job and the trickster, Plato's *Republic*, law versus custom, Levi-Strauss' work, and the primarily civilized phenomenon of schizophrenia. Throughout the book and integral to it is a brilliant delineation of the role of subjectivity in the quest for the primitive and an on-going discussion of the necessity of raising questions regarding primary human needs and the meanings of "fulfillment." Also discussed is the relevance of Marx and Rousseau to Diamond's own work; it is here, where the basic questions concerning method are asked, that it is best to begin examining that work.

In Diamond's view, Marx gives us the "impulse" but not the "means" to understand and use the primitive. Bound to Western civilization and, more immediately, nineteenth century Europe, Marx's categories "delineate the realm of alienated history" while Marx himself centers historical "progress" in Europe and takes little interest in the actual life of the primitive (106). Essentially negative and restrictively ethnocentric, such categories minimize a positive concern with "the full potential of the generic-symbolic capacities of men" (104). Since the primitive juxtaposes a realm of disalienation to civilization, Diamond calls for a broader-based ethnology developed from the "converse" of Marx's categories (107). Such an ethnology would situate negation more consciously within an unfolding "normative" conceptualization of the preconditions of human fulfillment. That is, it would re-center critique in Marx' unelaborated assumption "that there is a nucleus of possibilities in human nature which 'the ensemble of social relations' in modern civilization distorts" (345). As such, it would reduce the dependence of critique on positivist (civilized) warping and on mere speculation which, in civilization, often tends to affirm a disembodied and privatized sense of humanness.

This brings us to Rousseau, the truly prophetic voice behind Diamond's personal, dialectic, and libertarian sense of the primitive and of the past. For Diamond, Rousseau's "impulse to understand primitive people is the other side of the impulse to understand the largely inexperienced but imagined possibilities of himself as a civilized person. This attempted synthesis, which embraces data, a model and introspection that clarifies further what one is observing, is the first and among the last lucid expressions of what anthropologists do or should do" (113). No statement by Diamond better describes his own purposes. The search for the primitive is rooted in civilized needs and a critical self-awareness of such needs. Civilized subjectivity mediates between the primitive and the self, seeking out its own "potential" in the

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primitive, searching for "the utopia of the past, projected into the future, with civilization the middle term"(208). Generalized as a critical mode of historical understanding, this search involves not only a conceptual process—"a reconstructive act of the imagination, simultaneously true to our stated purposes and faithful to the spirit of the object with which we are actively engaged" (341)—but also a "perceptual" process which requires an "unrelenting exploration of the self as it exists and may be imagined to exist" (211).

In this formulation, ethnocentricity, far from being a barrier to insight which must be deviously proscribed on behalf of objectivity, becomes instead the critically-perceived heart, in the most dis-alienated sense, of anthropology. Who am I in my time and place in relation to my perception of these others in their time and place? And what insights are generated in the affective layers of this dynamic? Having experienced the primitive directly and through the autobiographical and analytic reflections of others, Diamond himself concludes that our "idea of primitive society as existing in a state of dynamic equilibrium and as expressive of human and natural rhythms is a logical projection of civilized societies and is in opposition to civilization's actual state." But, he continues, "it also coincides with the real historical condition of primitive societies. The longing for a primitive mode of existence is no mere fantasy or sentimental whim; it is consonant with fundamental human needs, the fulfillment of which (although in different forms) is the precondition for our survival" (p. 207). It is not surprising to find Diamond concluding his chapter on "What History Is" by citing the Anaguta, whom he observed and associated with just prior to Nigerian independence, as his own unwitting mentors (p. 351). Or, earlier, "what struck me when I first looked into the faces of the Anaguta" was the impression that "the subtlest and most profound human needs...are more completely realized, if in inimitable ways, by primitives than among ourselves" (p. 61). *In Search of the Primitive* is rooted in such experiential moments made self-aware and turned toward critique.

In contrast to the habitual academic assumption that one's own experience is the last thing one should discuss or even trust, Diamond is here defending the need for a critical *self*-consciousness which, sounding the self to its depths, will be able to better understand where the other corresponds to and stands at variance with the self. And by self-consciousness I do not think he means a merely cerebralized awareness in which the vital self remains closeted in private life beyond its daily labors. Rather he means a re-uniting of feeling with thought, a primitive re-uniting he would say. One begins with "what struck me" and one works between what is felt and what is understood in terms of the experience and conclusions of self and others.

An outline of the "fundamental themes" which Diamond associates with primitive existence, many of which inform his own analytic practice, will serve to clarify what is meant here by this quite uncivilized sense of "self" or what Diamond calls the primitive's "immediate and ramifying sense of the person" (p. 173). The primitive is associated, in part, with the following: a kin-based society which fosters a "personalism" in relation to the other, including nature; modes of individual response which are concrete, existential, nominalistic, contextual, and deeply accepting of the ambiguous in human existence; a communalistic economics which is neither exploitative nor totally collectivist; a manifold sense of individual abilities (and human nature) expressed in the non-specialization of work and a situationalist understanding of certain social roles; the differentiating, discharging, and diffusion of affective experience in the individual life-cycle through social ritual, with the individual proceeding through and with socialized guideposts rather than "society"

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seeming to move despite the individual; and the communal and active dramatic expression of personal and social crises, including the expression (rather than privatization and repression) of destructive wishes and deeper existential ambivalence. Diamond in turn distils these particulars down to a primitive (pre-civilized, pre-alienation) existentialism, personalism, nominalism, and individuation as opposed to the primarily essentialist, abstract and analytic, impersonal and mechanical, and collectivist ways of civilized man.

When Diamond calls for a new grounding for critique informed by the primitive and centered in the "converse" of even the more critical categories of alienated history, he is talking about a reconstituted critique which would incorporate this primitive existentialism, nominalism, personalism, and individuation. In part such a critique takes civilized man as its subject and the primitive as its evaluative, i.e., critical, means. I interpret this to mean that even though the critic is impelled towards the conceptual, the analytic, and a certain impersonalism, he must at the same time remain conscious of the historical forcing of his own method. More than this, he must both recall and defy his own historical (civilized) determination in every possible instance: in his personalized self-awareness, in his remembrance of the intrinsic and shifting vitality of his embodied, individual subject; and, because of this subtle vitality, in his adherence to the element of contingency in history. In this regard, Diamond's work is exemplary. There is no question of abandoning a critical and conceptual method. Rather the issue is the necessity to *infuse* such a method with an awareness of qualitative ends which transcend civilized pathologies.

Writing to each of us, Diamond observes that most cultural anthropologists "overlook the individual event and actor in the attempt to delineate overall patterns and structures. These are, of course, legitimate efforts, but once they become surrogate for the need to confront the living flux of people making events they are mere academic exercises. The failure to confront the meaningful particular is a reflection of academic pathology..." (p. 347). Hence Diamond's loyalty to individuated subjects who, individuals together, are "capable of creating their own chances" (p. 351). Or his related faithfulness to context or the situational in experience. Or his sense of "history" as signifying both events and our attributions to events, the latter being not nearly as binding in terms of the future as a materialistic determinism suggests. Or, finally, his attention to the "subtle imperatives of man's nature" (p. 340) as apprehended in terms of a critically self-aware perception of the "living flux," including the self, and not merely in terms of the stratospheric systematics prevailing in critical theory today.

An example of Diamond's *human* understanding of the species-history dynamic can be found in his rendering of the historical break between the primitive and civilization. As "instruments of oppression," he argues, the early civilizations were not primarily the result of some "environmental or technical imperatives." Rather they signify "the new possibilities of power which men in certain positions found it necessary to cultivate and legitimate" (p. 17). This view, Diamond admits, implies a good deal about human nature, namely that "given the opportunity and driven by certain needs, some men will compound their profit and seek an illusory freedom, based on the exercise of power, at the expense of others" (p. 18). Intrinsic to this drive is what Diamond calls the "pathology of wealth," the displacement of a "command over things" among the (actually) alienated and powerless by an accumulation of power and luxury. "The sheer accumulation of wealth, the antithesis of primitive customary

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usage, was thus compensatory, a sign of the fear of impotence. It is a response of the alienated in pursuit of security; the manipulation of people is substituted for the command over things. As civilization spreads and deepens, it is ultimately man's self, his species being, which is imperialized" (pp. 9-10). Thus alienation is relocated from its 19th-century (and further alienated) position in determinist economics to its human origins. Quoting with approval a comment by S.F. Nadel, Diamond writes that "in a wider sense" the means of control in political society, the civilized politicization of society itself, is " 'deliberately conceived and [executed by]...agencies of an assimilation conscious of itself and of the message it carries' " (p. 277). To put it more bluntly, the men and women who haunt the boardrooms and classrooms and backrooms are, like the old temple dwellers, by no means unmotivated abstractions, even if they actually think, questionably so, that 'things' control them. Not men (or women) but rather some men have made and are making events and ideologies out of the particularity of their own situations. In a society whose activating humanness is lost in the opacity of bureaucratized performance and whose critical theory too readily writes off the existence of a meaningful subjectivity, perhaps there is a special need to remember what is a commonplace to the primitive. It seems to be just such a disalienated, primitive perspective that stands behind Gustav Landauer's observation that the "state is not something which can be destroyed by a revolution, but is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of human behavior; we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently" (quoted in Colin Ward's *Anarchy in Action*). Such a perspective simultaneously acknowledges and transcends alienation and then turns back on the alienated subject with a truer (and forgotten) sense of him or her as a potentially emergent rather than merely reactive being (p. 341).

There is a good deal of imprecision, perhaps inevitably so, in Diamond's depiction of the primitive-civilization break. The acquiescent complicity civilization demands and receives from so many remains a marginal fact in his discussion. So does the question of "needs," which motivates at its earliest stages the institutionalization of the division of labor. Be that as it may, the discussion is invaluable for its recentering of historical process in the vitally (even perversely) human and, more generally, for its situating of alienated history in the premises and fundamental themes of civilization itself. For it is the persistence or abolition of these themes that is the real test of significant historical change, and not such things as capitalized social relations, which, although important, are merely manifestations of the far deeper pathological thematics of civilization itself.

Of course, one could also object to certain other aspects of Diamond's book. In many respects it is only a beginning. Little is said about women or children or the character and importance of familial and sexual relations. Diamond's reasons for not discussing these things would be important to know. His almost completely positive model of the primitive will be disturbing to some readers, although it should be remembered that he consciously states the case "as simply and strongly, indeed naively" as possible (p. 117). Nor does the case lack an abundance of evidence from his own work and that of others. The issue of subjectivity is, in my view, one of the most crucial in the book and Diamond could well have treated it with even more depth, as pertaining to himself, than he does. Perhaps this will come in the future. He can also be annoyingly misleading, as when he drops into the classic Marxist stance of dismissing the anarchist tradition as naive and ineffectual. Given the libertarian spirit of his own critique and vision, it is astonishing that he does not even think fit to cite, let

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alone use, such relevant texts as Godwin's *Political Justice* or Kropotkin's *The State: Its Historic Role, Mutual Aid*, or *Fields, Factories and Workshops*. The denial of the anarchist legacy continues, even in the most unlikely places.

It is appropriate to mention that I first read *In Search of the Primitive* a short time after having returned from something of my own search for the primitive in Africa. Although I never experienced the primitive in Diamond's more strict ethnological sense, I now carry memories of experiences in which I felt what might be called the residues of the primitive. I am thinking of a rural and marginal and peasant Africa almost beyond the grip of the neo-colonial states. I recall certain gestures, a rare receptivity and expressiveness, a closeness of existence to the contours of nature, the easy sense of time, the inward insouciance, and more. My first reading of Diamond took place under the influence of such memories—and from the perspective of Buffalo, N.Y. Tested against my own experience and the evidence at hand, Diamond's basic argument seemed deeply true and I was understandably enthusiastic. Now, having returned to it again and again, I have lost none of that initial feeling. To experience the primitive, even in its last embodied echoes, is to sense with Diamond that "this is the way we were before we became what we are, this is the other side of our humanity" (p. 122). We are being conned out of just this sense of possibility by a civilization that imprisons critical reflection in an exercise yard of depersonalized abstracting, hoping, it sometimes seems, to cut the lifelines between critique and vital life. In the midst of what Kafka called the "frozen sea," we perhaps have a special need to preserve, in resistance, a warm-blooded self-awareness. The alternative, common enough already, is a mode of critique at once impalpable and humanly subjectless, a chilling double of civilization itself.

Tom Morris

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A compilation of papers presented at the First International *Telos* Conference, held at Waterloo, Ontario, in 1970. The conference papers represent the theoretical high point of the New Left, reflecting the internal tensions that led to its eventual demise. Articles by Breines, Buhle, Colletti, Dunayevskaya, Gross, Kosok, Piccone, and others. 240 pages. Cloth: $8.50. Paper: $2.75

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SHORT JOURNAL REVIEWS:*

ACTES DE LA RECHERCHE EN SCIENCES SOCIALES, 2:4 (August 1976)

54 blvd. Raspail, 75270 Paris. 80 francs per year. YVETTE DELSAUT, *"Le double mariage de Jean Célisse."* An ethnographic description of a couple's two marriage ceremonies, one working-class, the other solemn in character, yields a critique of the notion of class homogamy. CLAUDE GRIGNON, *"L'art et le métier: école parallèle et petite bourgeoisie."* On the basis of a survey of the graduates and stated aims of the *Conservatoire national des arts et métiers*, Grignon views this French educational institution for the lower-middle class as a failure on the part of the dominant class to realize its ideal of reconciling social contradictions in a practical realm. MICHEL VILLETTE, *"Psychosociologie d'entreprise et rééducation morale."* On the basis of participation in a program of "continuing education," the author analyzes the relationship between the introduction of techniques inspired by social psychology and business' modes of exercising power as one of primarily social and moral coercion which does not result in permanent behavior modification. CHARLES SUAUD, *"Splendeur et misère d'un petit séminaire."* Studies a Vendée parochial secondary school as exemplary of the current crisis in the pedagogical and vocational functioning of parochial high schools in France. PIERRE BOURDIEU, *"Notes pour une critique sociale du jugement." "Le Point's"* opinion survey of the French public's images of political leaders, in the form of the game "Chinese Portrait" wherein one attributes objects, persons, and colors to an individual, provides a basis for reflection upon social groups' judgments as acquisition of meaning systems of social practice. In revealing a classificatory system mediating survey respondents' choices to be that of principal oppositions in French society, Bourdieu emphasizes the contributory role of classificatory systems to the existence of social classes and thus the efficacy of a self-perpetuating system. DJG

ACTES DE LA RECHERCHE EN SCIENCES SOCIALES, 2:5 (October 1976)

Issue theme: "The Anatomy of Taste." PIERRE BOURDIEU, MONIQUE DE SAINT MARTIN, *"Anatomie du goût."* Constructs a theory of the "habitus" as a mediation between life styles and social positions in France on the basis of surveys, interviews, monographic studies and available statistical information. Debunks the myth of a working-class culture as a counter-culture in observing that social classes differ less in their degree of recognition of legitimate culture than in their understanding and knowledge of that culture. Artistic avant-garde taste on the other hand is deemed to be distinct from legitimate culture in that it is opposed to the pedantic tastes of groups rich in cultural capital (e.g. professors) and the luxurious tastes of those rich in economic capital. MARIE CLAIRE BOURDIEU, *"Gouts de femmes."* Reinterprets *Elle*'s report on the psychology of successful business women on the basis of their choice of office decoration so as to explain apparent differences between styles and functions of these work environments primarily in terms of the degrees of prevalence of cultural and economic capital and secondarily in terms of the degrees of rupture with traditional views of the feminine condition. DJG

ACTES DE LA RECHERCHE EN SCIENCES SOCIALES, 15 (June 1977)

JEAN-FRANCOIS BILLETER, *"Contributrion à une sociologie historique du mandarinat."* A sociological interpretation and lengthy historical situating of the autobiography of Li Zhi as a unique example from the Ming Dynasty of a thorough critique of the mandarin system. BERNARD VERNIER, *"Emigration et dérèglement du marché matrimonial."* A look at failures to maximize symbolic and economic profits on the matrimonial market in peasant societies in light of the consequences of changing emigration patterns and money's displacement of land as a primary source of social prestige on the Greek island of Carpathos. ABDELMALEK SAYAD, *"Les trois 'âges' de l'émigration algérienne en France."* Explains the process of transformation of social conditions and positions of Algerian emigrants in France as the result of a dialectic between familial and emigration structures in Algeria, on one hand, and in France, on the other, as well as the result of compensation for structural disequilibria in the Algerian emigrant community of France. DJG

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*This section has been compiled by John Fekete, Department of English, Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario K9J FB8, Canada. The following have contributed reviews: Brian Crawford, David Dickens, John Fekete, Dorothy Gehrke, Kermit Hummel, John Keane, Tim Luke, Peter Murphy, Greg Renault, Brian Singer, Wodek Szemberg, Susan Wheeler, Nancy Wood, Jan Young.

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ACTES DE LA RECHERCHE EN SCIENCES SOCIALES, 16 (September 1977)

CLAUDE GRIGNON, *"Sur les relations entre les transformations du champ religieux et les transformations de l'espace politique."* Description of the mechanisms whereby the Church imposes itself upon types of ideological production and the inversion of the Church's previous political space due to the assimilation of psychoanalysis and Marxism by leftist Catholic intellectuals. LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN, *"Remarques sur 'Le rameau d'or' de Fraser."* Translation of posthumously published notes dating from 1931. JACQUES BOUVERESSE, *"L'animal cérémoniel: Wittgenstein et l'anthropologie."* Contrasts Wittgenstein's notions of explanation and understanding with those commonly adopted by the natural and social sciences as well as structural anthropology so as to argue the originality and coherence of Wittgenstein's views as expressed in the above-mentioned posthumously published notes. PIERRE BOURDIEU, *"Questions de politique."* Examines the phenomena of electoral apathy and abstention from opinion polls as significant for understanding the relationship between the logic specific to ideological production and the logic of the field of social classes. DJG

AUTOGESTION ET SOCIALISME, 37-38 (April 1977)

12, ave. du Maine, Paris 15. 32 francs. *"Traces, contradictions, projets."* On the occasion of the journal's 10th anniversary, the editors wash their dirty linen in public. Various complaints are voiced about the emergent division among the editors into inner and outer circles, the tendency to exclude Proudhonist and institutionalist analysis, the failure to examine the "concrete," the inability to extend the analysis beyond the factory, and the static character of the journal's sales despite the recent popularization of the term "autogestion." ROLAND BIARD, *"Bakounine: Théoricien de l'autogestion?"* On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Bakunin's death, this article examines this anarchist's contribution to the theory of "autogestion." Although Bakunin believed that the revolutionary should be only the midwife and not the field-marshal of the revolution, the author perceives a tendency in Bakunin's practice to try to force destiny. Moreover, his vision of a post-revolutionary society, because it does not envisage the collective control of capital and its investment, does not conform to the modern conception of "autogestion." Nevertheless, his "profound faith in the creative capacity of humanity" places him as a precursor of this concept. DANIEL GUERIN, *"Actualité de la pensée de Bakounine dans la révolte juvenile d'aujourd'hui."* Both Bakunin and the youth rebellion sympathize with marginals, are hostile to the state, the hocus-pocus of democracy, political alliances whose end is not the direct and immediate emancipation of the workers, authoritarian communism and the state. MICHEL RAPTIS, *"Sur l'importance internationale de la révolution hongroise (1956)."* Hungary provides the most advanced point of revolutionary mass activity since October 1917, moving beyond the formal democracy of the intelligentsia to the direct democracy of the workers. VLADIMIR-CLAUDE FISERA, *"Conseils ouvriers et autogestion en Europe de l'est 1956-69."* A brief comparison of the high points of "autogestion" in Eastern Europe is followed by two rather sobering observations: the apparent acceptance by the workers, even in moments of opposition, of the ideology of expertise, and the relative failure of the lower class to participate in organs of self-control. PAUL MATTICK, *"Les soviets et le parti."* This article begins by noting the untenability of a large organization which, while claiming to be revolutionary, must simultaneously partake in the normal functioning of society—a contradiction to which the opposed positions of Lenin and Rosa Luxembourg are a response. The author believes the germs of a solution can be found in the spontaneous emergence of workers' councils, and continues by examining the experience of the latter in 1905 and 1917. The failure of workers' councils and the construction of an authoritarian state result in part from the lack of any anterior model of a post revolutionary society. This part of the article, which will presumably continue into the next issue of the journal, concludes by examining the ambiguities of Marx's position on the Paris Commune. BS

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THEORY, 1:1

Department of Political Science, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 2E9. **$7** per year to students (3 issues). Foreign orders add $2. BEN AGGER, *"Dialectical Sensibility I : Critical Theory, Scientism and Empiricism."* A critique of Horkheimer and Adorno for their alleged inability to transcend the dialectic of negation to a more "flexible" orientation toward emancipatory tendencies in advanced capitalism. MICHAEL WEINSTEIN, *"Political Philosophy and the Public Situation."* A critical evaluation of the contemporary crisis of political philosophy, in which the "new universalism" of twentieth century thought (the

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discovery of "intra-subjectivity" and "intra-consciousness") is seen correctly as an attempt at occluding political activity as an authentic dimension of human ontogenesis in an age characterized by a "deprived public situation." ARTHUR CROKER, *"On Moral Economy."* Toward a philosophical politics of a marginalized Canada against the inherent instability of world corporatism. IRVING LAYTON, *"Harold Laski: The Paradoxes of a Liberal Marxist."* A critical examination of the tension within Laski's thought between altruistic liberal parliamentarism and Marxist revolutionary praxis. PHILLIP HANSEN, *"T.H. Green and the Moralization of the Market."* Green's movement from utilitarian to idealist categories is seen as being in accord with the shifting imperatives of industrial capitalism; plus commentary, reviews, communiques, poetry. JCK

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THEORY, 1:2

ROD PREECE, *"The Myth of the Red Tory."* Against the dominant interpretation of Canadian conservatism which, as an amalgam of forms of Whiggery, contains "no Hegelians, no romantics, no corporate-organic-collectivist elements." DEENA WEINSTEIN, *"Bureaucratic Opposition: The Challenge to Authoritarian Abuses at the Workplace."* An intelligent reconstruction of some concepts of conflict theory so as to grasp the origins and possible outcomes of movements against technical rationalization. BEN AGGER, *"Dialectical Sensibility II: Towards a New Intellectuality."* PATRICIA HUGHES, *"Mary Wollstonecraft: Stoic Liberal-Democrat."* The radical promise of Wollstonecraft's understanding of the domination of women and the poor as ultimate consequences of private property relations is criticized because of its vitiation by her Stoic revision of liberty and equality into their "natural" counterparts. MAURICE EISENSTEIN, *"Democratic Politics and Ideology: R.G. Colingwood's Analysis of Metaphysics in Political Philosophy and Moral Civilization;"* plus a communique (on William Leiss' *The Limits to Satisfaction*), reviews poetry. JCK

COLLEGE ENGLISH, 38:8 (April 1977)

National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801. $2.50 per copy. Issue theme: "Mass Culture, Political Consciousness and English Studies." Theoretical and applied culture critique from a leftist perspective. DONALD LAZERE, *"Mass Culture, Political Consciousness, and English Studies: An Introduction."* A summary of the mass culture debates is followed by an explicit attempt to legitimate Marxist cultural theory as a method for critical, scholarly analysis. STANLEY ARONOWITZ, *"Mass Culture and the Eclipse of Reason: The Implications for Pedagogy."* Critical theory's analysis of reified culture is applied to the "literacy" question. The larger social tendency to collapse reality into mere literal appearances—a manifestation of instrumental domination—is reproduced by teaching techniques centered on problems rather than concepts. Instead, schools can play a part in the reconstruction of critical thought by encouraging serious demystification of mass cultural phenomena. KATE ELLIS, *"Queen for One Day at a Time."* The recent portrayal of specifically female priorities on prime time TV situation comedies indicates a widening of media-sanctioned "boundaries of the possible," a tendency which is not yet free of sexist contradictions. DENNIS PORTER, *"Soap Time: Thoughts on a Commodity Art Form."* The time, space and language of TV soap operas are shown to be related to those of conventional realism, reflecting and communicating a consciousness which legitimates a preoccupation with solely private lives. TODD GITLIN, *"Spotlights and Shadows: Television and the Culture of Politics."* The following topics are examined: how TV (especially news) shapes political language and thought; how consciousness is trivialized by media fetishism of facts; internal contradictions generated by this process; and the complex effects of TV on political movements. The latter analysis develops an interesting three-stage dialectic of creation-response regarding the left in the 1960s. ROBERT CIRINO, *"An Alternative American Communications System."* Abstract utopian design for a public TV corporation to complement the existing commercial ones. Proposes four separate, independent networks, each representing one political perspective. ROBERT CHRISMAN, *"Blacks, Racism and Bourgeous Culture."* The rise of the black cultural vision is shown to mask and legitimate a real lack of power in U.S. society. Chrisman suggests that the general shift from print- to media-literacy opens new routes for strategic appropriation of traditional print-literacy means by blacks. CAROL LOPATE, *"Selling to Ms. Consumer."* A description of the transformation in household life which occurred with the development of mass consumption in 1900-1920. LOUIS KAMPF, *"A Course on Spectator Sports."* Report on a series of classes focusing on the role sports played in the development of class consciousness in the rise of industrial capitalism. FREDRIC

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JAMESON, *"Class and Allegory in Contemporary Mass Culture: 'Dog Day Afternoon' as a Political Film."* In the most theoretically sophisticated article here, Jameson points out the ambiguity of a film that utilizes political paradigms recently incorporated into media clichés to develop themes ("figurable class articulation") of the everyday, but which at the same time draws on more traditional cultural stereotypes to produce a second narrative characterized by 1950s nostalgia and adherence to the Hollywood "star system." WILLIAM D.LUTZ, *" 'The American Economic System': The Gospel According to the Advertising Council."* The claim that the U.S. Advertising Council's "public service messages" present a distorted picture of social reality is advanced via an excellent point-by-point criticism of the mystification contained in a recently published economics booklet. DONALD LAZERE, *"Mass Culture, Political Consciousness, and English Studies: A Selected Bibliography."* A useful selection containing some standard works, but emphasizing recent radical scholarship. GR

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, 3:1 (Spring 1977)

M.E. Sharpe Inc., 901 N. Broadway, White Plains, NY 10603. $5 per copy. Special Issue: Walter Benjamin and the Sociology of Art. ANDREW ARATO, *"Introduction: The Antinomies of the Neo-Marxian Theory of Culture."* A clear survey of Benjamin's major concepts is followed by an analysis of the Adorno-Benjamin discussion. The early notion of the dialectic having reached a standstill, which focused on civilization as domination, was paralleled by a theoretical distrust of total systems which led Benjamin to a discontinuous essay style in an attempt to portray contradictions without transcendence. The concepts of allegory and aura pointed to cultural characteristics being counterparts to stages of capitalism, while an emphasis on cultural production and reception rather than formal analysis made Benjamin receptive to Brecht's project for collective, political art. Adorno, using the early historical judgment (dialectic at standstill) against the later optimism, developed a complementary body of cultural criticism; Arato notes that this opposition governs the following two essays on the late and early Benjamin, respectively. HEINZ PAETZOLD, *"Walter Benjamin's Theory of the End of Art."* This chapter taken from Paetzold's *Neomarxist Aesthetics* draws on Adorno in an attempt to explicate critically the categoric structures used in Benjamin's material analyses. Examined first is the negation of art via the obsolescence of traditional forms of drama, epic and lyric. Rather, new developments such as Brecht's epic theatre and technical transformations in mass media raise the possibility of a postaesthetic art that might be capable of ideological demystification. In spite of the notion of "shock reception," Benjamin is said to reduce aesthetics to its social function. Secondly, technical reproducibility is seen as the constructive counterpart to the decline of the aura, a relationship reproduced in reception: while the auratic work can be adequately received by the isolated subject, the mechanically reproduced work is the object of collective reception. Paetzold claims that this picture of the development of art is unnecessarily antinomic; cult-exhibition value, aesthetic-postaesthetic work, auratic-mechanically reproducible work, plus the dichotomy of reception are overly sharp distinctions. SANDOR RADNOTI, *"The Early Aesthetics of Walter Benjamin."* This chapter from an unpublished book on Benjamin locates the early work "in the kinetic space of divergence between Bloch and Lukács" by examining Benjamin's 1922 study of Goethe, and his 1923-25 study of *Trauerspiel.* In a vision governed by resignation, art is initially seen as immanent, but later situated within the social process. The distinction between objective content and reality content is combined with a notion of totality drawn from the early Lukács, to which is later added a concrete historical subject for reception. Even then, Benjamin's theory of origin focuses on "the inner structure of the essential," utilizing antinomies between history and art, subjective and objective aesthetic judgment, ideological and religious needs. Radnoti's interpretation seems to overemphasize the Lukács-Benjamin link. GR

JOURNAL OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY (Fall 1975)

Humanities Press Inc., Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716. $9 per year (2 issues). J.H. VAN DEN BERG, *"On Hallucinating."* A brief critical history of the psychopathology of hallucinating, covering the theories of Leuret, Moreau de Tours, Husserl, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. RENE L'ECUYER, *"Self-Concept Investigation: Demystification Process."* I.K. MOUSTGAARD, *"Phenomenological Descriptions after the Manner of Edgar Rubin."* There is little substantive effort made to acquaint the reader with the work of Rubin in this detailed description of "scientific." JAMES J. BARRELL, *"A Self-Directed Approach for a Science of Human Experience."* This article attempts to develop an "experiential approach" for the generation of experimental hypotheses which can then be publicly verified. Rejecting the earlier Gestalt and

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introspective methods, the authors suggest the use of an experiential self-directed approach where hypotheses are formulated from a personal base. While the intent to give experimental psychology a firmer ground in the actual experiencing subject is admirable, it is difficult to determine how their desired public verification procedure, necessary to avoid solipsism, is to be performed. EVA WONG, *"Visual and Tactile Perception Reconsidered: From an Empirical-Phenomenological Perspective."* This reports on an empirical phenomenological experiment that is designed to show the interaction between visual and tactile perception. The results indicate that only in spontaneous pre-reflective perception are seeing and touching interdependent. J.A.S. VAN SPAENDONCK, *"An Analysis of the Metabletical Method."* An introduction to the cultural psychology of J.H. van den Berg who claims a "new scientific vision" as evidenced by his metabletical theory or theory of changes. Rejecting the attempt to define man's essence in an ahistorical mode, van den Berg suggests instead that man is a creature of historical contingencies. By investigating both synchronic and diachronic change, his methodology seeks to elucidate the present in reference to the past, while still allowing for a humanly determined future. However, his methodology remains opaque and at times slips into a Diltheyan hermeneutic. JY

JOURNAL OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY (Spring 1976)

JAN HENDRIK VAN DEN BERG, *"Have You Seen the Pantheon?"* A phenomenological account of the difference between perception and imagination. The analysis is performed within the dichotomy of a "present-absent" criterion such that perception is seen to concern itself with things present, carrying with it a greater sense of immediacy, while imagination only re-presents, remaining susceptible to the intrusion of perceived reality. KENNETH J. SHAPIRO, *"The Elusive in Experience."* ALPHONSO LINGIS, *"The Void That Awaits the Force of Anxiety,"* A phenomenological description of anxiety as anticipation of death—the void. The void is seen as teleologically structuring and determining experience, giving direction to one's powers of appropriative action. JEFFNER ALLEN, *"A Husserlian Phenomenology of the Child."* An account of the Husserlian reduction which purportedly will allow the observer to perform the eidetic description of the child, revealing necessary a priori structures. The analysis claims to establish the existence of a substratum originating in the prenatal stage of development which underlies the inter-subjective act of empathy whereby a child becomes child through recognition of the other. ROBERT L. HALL, VIRGINIA E. COBEY, *"Emotion as the Transformation of World."* While accepting the Sartrean depiction of emotion as the transformation of the world, the authors criticize his notion that this change is somehow illegitimate. They argue that Sartre's formulation of reason and unreason, neutral and magical consciousness leads to an excess of dichotomies. Hall and Cobey would like to collapse these dichotomies by grounding them in a more unified "felt" experience which would still allow for emotion to be understood as a change of significance seen in the world and experienced through the body. GEORGE D. YONGE, *"A Dynamic Image of Masculine and of Feminine Movement."* FRANCOIS H. LAPOINTE, *"The Existence of Alter Egos: Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty."* Recognizing the centrality of the problematic nature of intersubjectivity for phenomenological psychology, the author presents a brief description of the Sartrean en-soi—pour-soi distinction contrasted to the body-subject formulation offered by Merleau-Ponty. JY

JOURNAL OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY (Fall 1976)

ERLING ENG, *"Locating Erwin Straus."* Eng sees straus as addressing himself to the tension that exists between man's experience of the world and the 'scientific' account of it. This scientific account, enhanced by the Copernican revolution as well as by the mathematical formulation of gravitational laws, viewed man's upright posture as an opposition to the earth's gravity, in contrast to the Platonic conception of man's uprightness understood as a suspension from above. In Straus' phenomenological anthropology, it is in and through this opposition that man is seen to take his stand in the stream of change. From this position in the world, the other becomes visible to man. The 'lived moment' achieved through uprightness becomes inseparable from a horizon of meaning to be realized. For Straus, ontological and epistemological questions in experience collapse into one another. PETER TITELMAN, *"A Phenomenological Approach to Psychopathology: The Conception of Erwin Straus."* Critical of the objectivistic Cartesian conception of man assumed by Freudian and physiological theorists, Straus, influenced by Husserl, stresses the intentionality of consciousness and believes that the task of phenomenological psychology is the descriptive exploration of immediate sense experience in order to determine the 'basic axioms of everyday life.' Psychopathology is grounded on a prior understanding of the norm of human existence. MICHAEL MARSH, *"Towards a Framework of*

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Memory." A critique of conventional reductionistic theories about memory. Straus suggests that human experience has its own structure of lived time which transcends the realm of physical events. Past experience is preserved in its 'suchness' and, for Straus, is capable of being reactivated in lived time. DAMIAN VALLELONGA, *"Straus on Shame."* HENN EY, *"Activité perceptive et activité hallucinatoire."* RONALD BRUZINA, *"Toward a Psychology of Technology: Reflections on Themes in the Work of Erwin Straus."* Utilizing the theories of André Leroi-Gourham and Erwin Straus, Bruzina attempts to provide a psychology of technology from a phenomenological-anthropological perspective. Fundamental to this is the maintenance of the upright posture in opposition to nature which, it is argued, provides for the concurrent development of language and tool use. The argument is that technical activity, as a system of articulation, must be viewed as correlative to and linked with the symbolic expression of language. WILLIAM F. FISCHER, *"Erwin Straus and the Phenomenological Approach to Psychopathology."* JY

JUMP CUT, No. 9

P.O. Box 865, Berkeley, CA 94701. $4 per year (4-6 issues). PETER BISKIND, *"Jaws, Between the Teeth."* Though the shark initially serves as a metaphor for sexual and class power, its final function is to redeem the liberal self-image of the American male. MICHAEL KLEIN, *"Nashville and the American Dream."* Celebrated both for its satiric comment on middle America and the country and western music industry, *Nashville*'s major accomplishment rests on its use of a non-linear narrative structure and Brechtian distantiation to expose the forces of oppression in capitalist society and simultaneously to reveal the roots of popular resistance. STEVE ABRAHAMS, *"Buying Nashville."* While Robert Altman challenges traditional film structures, his lack of a coherent political perspective ultimately undermines the progressive moments otherwise achieved by the film's form and content. REYNOLD HUMPHRIES, *"Numero Deux, Godard's Synthesis: Politics and the Personal."* The consolidation of Godard's politics is revealed in his film *Numero Deux*, an exploration into the personal and political intertwining of male-female relationships, within the context of a radical interrogation of various codes at work in the filmic text. *"Psychoanalysis and Film: An Exchange." Screen* contributors, Ben Brewster, Steven Heath and Colin McCabe defend the journal's recent ventures into (a specifically Lacanian) psychoanalytic theory. The knowledge that psychoanalysis produces of the constitution of the subject is particularly relevant to the inquiry of film theory into the subject's placement within specific signifying practices. CHUCK KLEINHANS, *"Ventriloquist Psychoanalysis."* The elevated status the preceding authors accord the "science" of the unconscious prevents the necessary critique of psychoanalytic discourse itself. Consequently, the subject posited for study, defined by the Freudian-Lacanian unconscious, is rejected in favor of a more socio-historical appreciation of subject formation.

JUMP CUT, No. 10-11

TANIA MODLESKI, *"Wertmüller's Women: Swept Away by the Usual Destiny."* Rather than employing satiric comment to illuminate the complex relations between sex and class, Wertmüller's use of this method serves instead to uphold and reinforce traditional attitudes. MICHELLE CITRON, CHUCK KLEINHANS, JULIA LESAGE, *"Milestones, White Punks in Revolution."* Combining a documentary and fictional film style, *Milestones* attempts to situate several participants of the New Left of the 1960s within the 'alternative lifestyle culture' of the present. However, the film evades the responsibility of critically apprehending the complexities of this evolving political experience, just as it lacks a radical political reflection on the cinematic experience itself. BILL HORRIGAN, *"Milestones in Others' Words."* The elevation of *Milestones* to the status of exemplary political cinema in European (especially French) circles reveals both the latter's inadequate and dubious framework for a systematic analysis of the film, and a telling unfamiliarity with the political experience that the film attempts to portray. THOMAS WAUGH, *"Emile de Antonio and the New Documentary of the Seventies."* While the documentary tradition has supported numerous attempts to elicit socio-political analysis from a cinema-verité style, de Antonio's films break new ground in radical documentary discourse. Following an aesthetic principle of "democratic didacticism," de Antonio acknowledges the camera's subjectivity and harnesses it in the service of a conscious and committed political orientation. BARBARA LEAMING, *"Merchant of Four Seasons, Structures of Alienation."* Fassbinder employs formal disjunctures to illustrate cinematically and criticize implicitly the alienated subjectivity imposed on the consciousness of workers by capitalist society. MARTIN WALSH, *"Noël Burch's Film Theory."* The rigor with which Burch explores the relationship

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between cinematic practice and a critique of ideology is a major contribution to the revival of a deconstructive film aesthetic. However, in advocating the primacy of this mode, Burch tends to underestimate those films that utilize pre-existing codes for subversive purposes.

L76, No. 3 (1977)

Johannes-Dech-Strasse 20, 5000 Cologne 60, West Germany. 50 DM per year (4 issues). HEINRICH BOELL, *"Es kann einem bange werden."* A political commentary on the persistence of Nazi sentiments within the West Germany army. PETER BENDER, *"Sozialismus oder Moderne."* A discussion of the function of ideology in Eastern Europe. Bender views social development here in light of a widely shared desire for modernity which, within the political context, yields a fusion of authoritarian power and an emphasis on consumerism as a legitimation for the perpetuation of the former. Having facilitated the process of industrialization, ideology constitutes today a fetter that signifies the limits of the system. Following upon his narrow usage of the notion of ideology, Bender suggests a need for a more de-ideologized view of the Soviet bloc. ALEXANDER KAEMPFE, *"Warum kennen wir die Sowjetunion so schlecht."* A rather questionable attempt to point out structural distortion in critical evaluations of the Soviet Union. Kaempfe trusts only Russian sources, and he is strongly critical of reliance on Soviet dissidents as points for reference in the ongoing discussion about the nature of the Soviet Union. He argues that once the Soviet Union has stopped serving the Left as a shining example for the world to follow, it should also, by the same token, no longer be portrayed as a paradigm of evil. WILLY BRANDT, *"Barcelona 1937—Madrid 1977."* An evaluation of the political process in Spain. WALTER HAUBRICH, *"Spaniens Linke."* An informative account of the Leftist forces in Spain. MICHAEL HARRINGTON, VOLKER MAUERSBERGER, *"Noch ist Sozialismus in den USA etwas Illegitimes."* A one-year old interview with the leader of the 'Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee.' GERD E. HOFFMANN, *"Computer als Instrumente der Macht."* On the dangers of computer technology. LUDWIG HARIG, *"Rousseau sät den Wind und erntet den Sturm."* An excellently written essay on the hostile reception granted Rousseau's writings by his contemporaries. HANS-PETER REISE, *"Der Prager Frühling und der Eurokommunismus."* A Trotskyist type of critique of an article by Zdenek Mlynar in *L76*, No. 2 (reviewed in *Telos* 33), in which the author warns socialists against unconditionally supporting attempts at democratization in Eastern Europe. Such experiments should, he says, be subordinated to the imperative of safeguarding the achievements of the 'already existing socialist society.' Unmitigated nonsense! Plus poetry, stories and documents. WS

L76, No. 4 (1977)

WALTER GRASSKAMP, *"Unser kultureller Notstand."* An interesting contribution to the ongoing debate on the relation between high culture and the culture of everyday life. It contains a very intelligent critique of the populist demands for the democratization and politicization of culture. ERICH FRISTER, *"Für die Nivellierung der Bildung nach oben."* On the problems of education in West Germany. HEINRICH VORMWEG, *"Ein bestimmtes Leben."* In light of many interpretations portraying Brecht as having had second thoughts about the socialist character of the GDR, the author is at pains to prove that, notwithstanding any of the tensions which existed between Brecht and the Communist leadership in East Germany, Brecht remained a true communist. How reassuring! ZDENEK MLYNAR, *"Prag nach der Charta 77."* An analysis of the political repression in Czechoslovakia. VACLAV HAVEL, *"Der Prozess."* A commentary on the trial of the Czech rock band, "Plastic People." Plus polemics, poetry and stories. WS

L76, No. 5 (1977)

MICHAL REIMAN, *"Ideologisierte Revolution."* An uninspiring analysis of the roots and the character of the Russian Revolution. ARNOST KOLMAN, *"Im dunkel der schwarzen Nacht."* A moving though incomplete analysis-confession of the failures of the communist movements. Kolman, a former director of the Institute for Philosophy in Czechoslovakia, places a special emphasis on the repercussions of the adoption of the Leninist notion of the party. WERNER PAUL, *"Die Suche nach der Erlösung."* A well-formulated critique of Solzhenitsyn's religious mysticism. While bringing to our attention critiques of Solzhenitsyn levelled at him from inside the Soviet dissident movement, Paul exemplifies, unfortunately, that unnerving leftist tendency to assume a paternalistic attitude toward the ideas of the Soviet dissidents. RUDOLF BAHRO, *"Die Revolution steht erst bevor."* Six essays summarizing the major theses of Bahro's recently published book, *Die Alternative; Zur Kritik des real existierenden Sozialismus,* for which the author was arrested in East Germany and charged with intelligence activity on behalf of foreign

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powers. Notwithstanding an overwhelming reliance on orthodox Marxist images of true communism (and thus replete with fundamental epistemological problems), the significance of Bahro's book lies in his radical critique of East European bureaucracy that he grounds in the notion of the division of labor. Together with Havemann and the expelled poet-singer Biermann, Bahro is to be seen now as a major focus of dissent in East Germany. WILLY BRANDT, *"Karl Marx und die Sozialdemokratie."* No surprises in this traditional social-democratic appraisal of Marxism. Should be read in light of a recent revival of Bernstein among theoretically inclined members of the SPD to meet the challenge of the 'truly' Marxist Left in West Germany. WS

NEW GERMAN CRITIQUE, No. 11 (Spring 1977)

German Department, Box 413, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI 53201. $6 per year (3 issues). Theme: Fascism as a Cultural Synthesis. Focuses on fascism as a romantic anti-capitalist fusion of aesthetics and politics and points to the manner by which it was able to construct a unified movement from a heterogeneous social basis, whose interests it contradicted. ANSON RABINBACH, *"Unclaimed Heritage: Ernst Bloch's 'Heritage of Our Times' and the Theory of Fascism."* An introduction to the following article that summarizes Bloch's 1935 analysis of fascism and contrasts it with that of Lukács. Fascism is seen as the dark side of utopian yearnings denied by the orthodox Left: drawing on the unclaimed heritage of Münzer, medieval mysticism, Nietzsche and *Lebensphilosophie*, Bloch is able to show how fascism filled a void in Enlightenment rationalism—an insight denied Marxist critics precisely because of their own naive dependence on reason. ERNST BLOCH, *"Nonsynchronism and the Obligation to its Dialectics."* This 1932 essay posits a non-synchronous contradiction—an antagonism of a still living past toward present and future trends, which spans all classes—as a counterpart to the synchronous contradiction of class struggle. Given the complexity of subjective and objective variants in the two forms of contradiction, Bloch calls for a "multi-level dialectics" to comprehend fascism. EBERHARD BUNTE, *"Fascism as a Depoliticized Mass Movement." The* concept of the fascist public sphere is advanced to account for popular support commanded by the early Nazi party in spite of its destruction of the bourgeois public sphere and its frequent opposition to majority interests and goals "objectively" represented by an ineffectual Left. TIM MASON, *"National Socialism and the Working Class, 1925-May 1933."* This outline of the development and social composition of the national socialist movement prior to the seizure of power focuses on the importance of the working class component of active Nazi supporters. *"Perspectives on the Fascist Public Sphere: A Discussion with Peter Brückner, Wilfried Gottschalch, Eberhard Knödler-Bunte, Olav Münzberg and Oskar Negt."* Extended substantive discussion. HENNING EICHBERG, *"The Nazi 'Thingspiel': Theatre for the Masses in Fascism and Proletarian Culture."* Rather than a manifestation of Nazi propaganda, the *Thingspiel* was an aesthetic and political counterforce to traditional bourgeois theater, rooted in a broad popular movement. Incorporating a new relationship between spectators and actors, increased spatial dimensions and rhythmic speech and singing by mass audiences, the *Thingspiel* as a new theatrical form reoriented the relationship of individual to whole in a manner that explicitly criticized bourgeois culture and politics. Though taken up by the Nazis as part of their early campaign, the form was quickly discarded because of its radical tendencies. PETER U. HOHENDAHL, *"Prolegomena to a History of Literary Criticism."* This call for a new history of criticism argues that as a mode of reception, literary criticism is an aspect of the totality of literature; the new approach would treat criticism as an integral component of literary history, incorporating previous types of historical methods and situating changes against larger institutional and social transformations. Review essays by Henry Schmidt, Alexander Stephan and Tim Luke. GR

NEW LEFT REVIEW, No. 104 (July-August 1977)

7 Carlisle Street, London W1V 6NL, England. $16 per year. LOUIS ALTHUSSER, *"On the Twenty-Second Congress of the French Communist Party."* Althusser's personal evaluation of the historical significance of the PCF's 22nd Congress, in which he sees "for the first time" the possibility of a "peaceful transition to socialism." This celebration by Althusser of the PCF's "democratic character" is best read in conjunction with the Castoriadis article in this issue of *Telos*. ROBERT BRENNER, *"The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism."* A well-done critical review of Wallerstein and Frank's work on development, which continues the ongoing critique of Sweezy's earlier work on the same subject. ZAGA GULOBOVIĆ, *"The History of Russia under Stalin."* Review of Roy Medvedev's *Let History Judge*. Gulobović maintains that after all is said and done, Medvedev fails to discover or

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discuss the social origins and political alternatives of Stalinism in the Soviet Union. RAYMOND PLANT, *"Hegel and Political Economy—II."* A continuation of the discussion begun in *NLR* No. 103. TAMARA DEUTSCHER, *"USSR: Democratic Alternatives."* Another installment in the absurd debate over how and when the USSR will become a truly "democratic" and "socialist" society. TL

PHILOSOPHY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, 7:1 (March 1977)

Wilfred Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3C5 Canada. $15 per year (4 issues). GREGORY BOUDREAUX, *"Freud on the Nature of Unconscious Mental Processes."* While there is evidence in Freud for the notion of 'unconscious intentions,' the persistence of the distinction between primary and secondary processes vitiates such a unifying possibility. Primary processes turn on the notion of an apparatus, while secondary processes involve the notion of an agent. Hence, those cases involving the apparatus cannot be described as intentional. BRYAN S. GREEN, *"On the Evaluation of Sociological Theory."* This is an attempt to mark off interpretive sociology from scientistic sociology. Tries to identify criteria of evaluation other than those of the natural sciences. MALCOLM HAMILTON, *"An Analysis and Typology of Social Power (Part II)."* MARCIA WESKOTT, *"Conservative Method."* A conservative disposition is seen as the "living legacy" of the positivist tradition in sociology. P.D. SHAW, *"Self-Interest and the Theory of Demand."* MICHAEL MARTIN, *"Neurophysiological Reduction and Type Identity."* A response to Lawrence Mucciolo concerning Martin's attempt to refute Fodor's argument of the impossibility of psychology being "micro-reduced to neurophysiology." TOBY E. HUFF, *"An Impossible Epistemology."* A review article of Paul Hirst's *Durkheim, Bernard and Epistemology.* Plus book reviews. KMH

PHILOSOPHY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, 7:2 (June 1977)

G.W. TROMPF, *"Social Science in Historical Perspective."* A historical consideration of the dissolution of a "general science of society."EVAN FALES, *"The Ontology of Social Roles."* Fales uses the notion of embodiment in conjunction with four types of entities—persons, officers, offices, nation or society—to develop a theory of society as a system or structure of offices embodied in persons. Having set up such a framework, Fales turns to the question of religious beliefs in the cultures studied by anthropology. The intelligibility of these beliefs can be found in the ontological formulation from Part I. For example, the notions of 'soul' could be seen as linked to the passing of individuals through a given 'office.' The persistence of this office as neither visible nor material is understood by the native people as the 'soul' of the individual. THOMAS NICKLES, *"On the Independence of Singular Causal Explanation in Social Science: Archaeology."* ANDREW WALKER, *"The Reality of Ethnomethodology."* Review article of Mehan and Wood's *The Reality of Ethnomethodology.* Book reviews. KMH

PHILOSOPHY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, 7:3 (September 1977)

BRIAN FAY, J. DONALD MOON, *"What Would an Adequate Philosophy of the Social Sciences Look Like?"* Centering on the split between naturalism and humanism in the philosophy of the social sciences, Fay and Moon argue that both positions are one-sided. Three questions would have to be answered: (1) what is the relation between interpretation and explanation in social science; (2) what is the nature of social scientific theory; (3) what is the role of critique. The final question is one that neither humanism nor naturalism can adequately address. CALVIN B. PETERS, JON A. HENDRICKS, *"Sundresis and Phenomenology: Intermediate Concepts of Value and Law in Social Science."* A discussion of natural law in Gurvitch, Husserl, Scheler and Heidegger. A.R. LOUCH, *"Discourse on Methodology: A Reply to Ernest Gellner."* JOSEPH AGASSI, *"The Zeitgeist and Professor Feuer."* LEWIS S. FEUER, *"Historical Method in the Sociology of Science: The Pitfalls of a Polemicist."* JOSEPH AGASSI, *"Second Reply to Professor Feuer."* Agassi replies to Feuer's reply to Agassi's review of Feuer's book. PAUL TIBBETTS, *"Feyerabend's 'Against Method:' The Case for Methodological Pluralism."* A half-baked attempt to come up with a half theory of truth (halfway between absolute truth and Feyerabend's 'anything goes'), a half theory of evidence (half way between the givenness of observationalism and Feyerabend's radical observation variance position) and a half theory of science (half way between a dogmatically imposed single method and, again, anything goes). TOMAS KULKA, *"How Far Does Anything Go? Comments on Feyerabend's Epistemological Anarchism."* One more rather smug attempt to dismiss Feyerabend's anti-rationalist stand by naively relying on assumptions that Feyerabend has already called into question. J.N. HATTIANGADI, *"The Crisis in Methodology: Feyerabend."* Notes that Feyerabend recognizes

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a real problem in intellectual standards at present, but in response, throws all intellectual standards overboard. Unfortunately, Hattiangadi fails to provide an alternative. H.S. HARRIS, *"Hegel for Today?"* Review article of Charles Taylor's *Hegel.* Argues for the contemporary relevance of Absolute Knowledge. Plus book reviews. KMH

POLITICS AND SOCIETY, 6:4 (1976)

Geron-X Inc., Box 1108, Los Altos, CA 94022. $9.50 for 4 issues. JOEL SAMOFF, RACHEL SAMOFF, *"The Local Politics of Underdevelopment."* Though European contact has had some effect on liberating productive forces, it has been more significant in inhibiting the evolution of new structures capable of resisting continued European control. Using Tanzania as a model, this active process of underdevelopment for much of Africa up to the present is examined and documented at length. RICHARD A. LAUDERBAUGH, *"Business, Labor and Foreign Policy: U.S. Steel, the International Steel Cartel and Recognition of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee."* While other historians have focused on the question of why United States Steel recognized the Steel Workers union when it did, the concern here is how the company was able to preserve its markets in the face of rising labor costs and prices, especially at a time when there was still a good deal of slack in both the domestic and international economies. ROGER FRIEDLAND, *"Class Power and Social Control: The War on Poverty."* This investigation of the allocation of War on Poverty funds among large central cities in the 1960s attempts empirically to assess the conditions under which the poor have an impact on urban politics. The basic hypothesis is that a city's position in the national class structure affects its responsiveness to its least powerful groups. Statistical analysis is used to argue that the local presence of nationally powerful corporations and labor unions is an important determinant of the inability of the poor to secure a high level of funds for War on Poverty programs. ROBERT A. GORMAN, *"Phenomenology, Social Science, and Radicalism: The View from Existence."* Concerned with the ambiguous relationship among empirical social science, radicalism, and existential phenomenology, the relevance of the latter (as distinct from Husserlian phenomenology) for studying society, as well as the heuristic potential of Marxism in the search for valid social knowledge, is examined. PFM

PRAXIS, No. 3 (1976)

Box 207, Goleta, CA 93017. $7 per year. DON GORDON, *"Bicentennial."* Poem. JEAN THIBAUDEAU, *"Preliminary Notes on the Prison Writings of Gramsci: The Place of Literature in Marxian Theory."* Despite the ambitious subtitle, this article is a survey of main topics related to literature and culture in the *Prison Notebooks*: national languages, Pirandello and theater, artists and intellectuals, popular art and cultural struggle, and Dante. ANTONIO GRAMSCI, *"The Theater of Pirandello."* Reflections on cultural vs. aesthetic value and the contribution of Pirandello's literary language. DAVID KUNZLE, *" 'The Reader's Digest'—A Self-Image."* Introduction to the following article provides background information on sales, intent, readership, moral stance and political role of this magazine. ARIEL DORFMAN, *"Salvation and Wisdom of the Common Man: The Theology of 'The Reader's Digest'."* An excellent ideology-critique that details the communication of a world view. *Reader's Digest's* compartmentalization of knowledge fragments the contradictions of the capitalist system into discrete cases managed by faith in science and the "common man," an ethical-political position that ideally resolves material problems. CARLOS BULOSAN, *"I Want the Wide American Earth."* Poem. E. SAN JUAN JR., *"In the Belly of the Monster: The Filipino Revolt in the U.S."* Introduction to the preceding poem and the two following pieces that discusses the relevance of Carlos Bulosan's life and work in the context of a reawakened Filipino-American radical consciousness. CARLOS BULOSAN, *"My Education."* Autobiographical sketch of the growth of radical awareness. CARLOS BULOSAN, *" 'Be American' ."* Narrative similar to the preceding one, about a close friend of Bulosan's. KENNETH COUTTS-SMITH, *"Theses on the Failure of Communication in the Plastic Arts."* Provocative insights that link Western art to a sacralization of the religious impulse in rising capitalist society. NAN BAUER MAGLIN, *"Visions of Defiance: Work, Political Commitment and Sisterhood in 21 Works of Fiction, 1895-1925."* B. TRAVEN, *"An Introduction to the Jungle Novels."* Previously published notes to the author's own work on the Mexican Revolution. MARC ZIMMERMAN, *"Brecht and the Dynamics of Production."* In a four-stage movement from general to particular, Brecht's problematic—finding a basis for praxis in apparently closed cultural forms—is explored in "The Good Woman of Setzuan," seen as an immanent critique of false dichotomies in bourgeois thought.

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Zimmerman also emphasizes the importance of reception and performance context in the overall impact of a Brecht play and proceeds to evaluate critically a 1975 Ann Arbor performance of this play. JULIAN PRZYBOS, *"On the Field."* ADAM WAZYK, *"The Railroad Worker."* ANTONIO GRONOWICZ, *"Village Sketch."* Poems. BRAM DIJKSTRA, *"Painting and Ideology: Picasso and 'Guernica'."* Penetrates the ususal perception of the painting as a radical statement and argues that instead, 'Guernica' exploits the suffering it portrays by failing to negate the abstract, isolated (totalitarian) conception of the human individual. By reproducing in its own fashion the very characteristics it apparently protests, it actually furthers the process of dehumanization. JOHN M. REILLY, *"Beneficent Rouguery: The Detective in the Capitalist City."* Examination of the glorification of detectives in late 19th-century American literature. ROGER HOWARD, *"A Measure of 'The Measures Taken': Zenchiku, Brecht and Idealist Dialectics."* Examination of the sources and variants of the play shows it to be critical of both extremes of absolutism and relativism as forms of authoritarian idealism. EILEEN SYPHER, *"Toward a Theory of the Lyric: Georg Lukács and Christopher Caudwell."* While both critics see lyric poetry as fusing the individual and the social, they differ on the functions of poetry: for Lukács, radical content is primarily cognitive, while for Caudwell poetry addresses mass productive action. FERENC FEHER, *"Ideology as Demiurge in Modern Art."* A re-examination of the ideological judgment pronounced upon modern art reveals its theorem (sensuously organized idea) to be both the content and form of its character, opening new possibilities of combined maturity and innocence, as well as universal possibilities of generalized (rather than particular) forms. THEODORE SHANK, *"The San Francisco Mime Troupe Commemorates the Bicentennial with 'False Promises—Nos Enganaron'."* NORMAN RUDICH, *"The Marxism of Lucien Goldmann in 'The Philosophy of the Enlightenment'."* Review essay. JONATHAN CREWE, *"Lenin and Geology."* Delightful Althusserian parody. GR

RADICAL AMERICA, 11:4 (July-August 1977)

P.O. Box BN, Cambridge, MA 02104. $8 for 4 issues. NELL PAINTER, HOSEA HUDSON, *"Hosea Hudson: A Negro Communist in the Deep South."* Excerpts from an oral history biography of a black steel worker from Birmingham. This recounts his first years as a Communist organizer in the 1930s. The daily life of party activists and particularly their attempts to circumvent repression and racial disunity are emphasized. The Communist Party's advocacy of self-determination for the "black-belt nation" in the South and the work of the block and neighborhood clubs within the unemployment movement demonstrates their fight for immediate demands in building a base in poor neighborhoods. This stress on party work at the base is intended to allow for a re-evaluation of the history of the Communist Party and its meaning in the development of the American working class. However, the article itself contains far too much praise and nowhere nearly enough critical evaluation. SONIA SAXON, *"Going Down Dying,"* and *"Going Down Fighting."* Two poems. JONATHAN KATZ, *"The Founding of the Mattachine Society: An Interview with Henry Hay."* Excerpt from the author's book, *Gay American History.* The original founder and principal figure in establishing the first Mattachine Society details the early history of that homosexual liberation organization since it was founded about 1950. PETER ORESICK, *"Family Portrait 1933,"* *"My Father."* Two poems reprinted from the author's book, *The Story of Glass.* MATTHEW RINALDI, *"Dissent in the Brotherhood: Organizing in the Teamsters Union."* On the basis of his own and others' experiences of organizing within the union, some of the strengths and weaknesses of different strategies used by the Left are discussed. The work of insurgent groups within the Teamsters—particularly the Teamsters for a Decent Contract and its successor, the Teamsters Democratic Union—is described. Though the improbability of trade unions being transformed into vehicles o of the Left is stressed, the experience of the TDC and TDU is meant to show to some extent that organized socialist groups can have an impact in mobilizing workers around particular issues. PFM

RADICAL PHILOSOPHERS' NEWSJOURNAL, No. 9 (Fall 1977)

12 Dartmouth Street, Somerville, MA 02145. $4 for 3 issues. LARRY ELLE, *"Individualism and Class Consciousness."* Individualism as ideology as as a personal lifestyle is examined with the use of Reich's notion of character structure to help describe common socialization processes. The plight of workers who attempt to be individuals is described, showing how their life circumstances undermine their efforts. Concluding remarks are addressed to how Marxists might attempt to organize to change consciousness. JOHN STEVENSON, *"Marx's Theory of Ideology."* Richard

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Lichtman's contention that there is a big change in Marx's theory of ideology from *The German Ideology* to *Capital* is taken to task in a more orthodox and cliché-ridden explanation of how bourgeois ideology is produced. MICHAEL GOLDMAN, *"The Material Basis for Progress in Science."* A critique of Feyerabend's call to "democratize" science by giving a community or society the power to allocate resources for research in whatever way the majority wishes (presented to the Conference on Epistemological Relations between the Sciences and the Humanities at Miami University). PFM

THE SECOND WAVE, 5:1 (Spring-Summer 1977)

Box 344 Cambridge A, Cambridge, MA 02139. $4 for 4 issues. CATHERINE AVRIL, MARA MATH, *"Yvonne Wanrow."* McDUFF, PERNELL, SAUNDERS, *"An Open Letter to the Anti-Rape Movement."* Critique of anti-rape groups that are no more than extensions of the criminal justice system or that are primarily oriented toward helping the victim. The authors argue in favor of community education and community supported alternatives to the criminal justice system. CATHERINE AVRIL, *"Prudah: A Feminist's Hell."* CAROL EHRLICH, *"Socialism, Anarchism and Feminism."* Erlich argues that social anarchism is the theoretical articulation of heretofore intuitive radical feminist notions of non-authoritarian, non-hierarchical, anti-domination principles, carried to their logical, theoretical conclusion. Made explicit, this connection would carry radical feminism forward. Ehrlich sees *socialist* feminism in its diverse forms as either antithetical to *radical* feminism or as a futile attempt to link feminism to a tradition that is unable to accommodate it without major, and contradictory, revisions. SALLY HACKER, *"Farming Out the Home: Women and Agribusiness."* Reviews and poetry. SW

SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, No. 36 (November-December 1977)

Agenda Publishing Co., 397 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. $12 for 6 issues. JAMES LIVINGSTON, *"Politics, Ideology and the Origins of American Revolutions."* Offers another answer to that age-old question, what is to be done? The work of W.D. Burnham provides the foundation for claiming that the two-party system in the U.S. is breaking down. As Republicans did around the issue of anti-slavery in the pre-Civil War period, socialists today could build a broad base of support by unifying diverse groups around the issue of socialism. RICHARD LICHTMAN, *"Marx and Freud, Part 3: Marx's Theory of Human Nature."* The third of in a series on the incompatibility of Marx and Freud. Here Lichtman is concerned primariliy with presenting Marx's view of human nature—man as "self-transformative." DAVID PLOTKE, *"Marxist Political Theory and the Problem of Revisionism."* Plotke reviews the debates between Bernstein and Luxemburg, Kautsky and Lenin, and the Sino-Soviet split. The upshot is that the notion of revisionism is hazy at best. The issue could only be posed after a "rigorous analysis of what is lasting and what is not" in Marx and Lenin—without, of course, coming to rely on the authority of the texts. Finally, further problems can only be raised by abandoning the entire problematic of revisionism, e.g., the nature of bourgeois democracy and its relation to the modern state. KMH

THEORY AND SOCIETY, 4:4 (Winter 1977)

Elsevier Scientific Publishing Co., Box 330, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. $15 per year. DAVID JORAVSKY, *"The Mechanical Spirit: The Stalinist Marriage of Pavlov to Marx."* Claims that the various intellectual and political pursuits keep the peace among themselves by pretending to be complementary units in a single army of truth seekers, while in fact the labor of the various pursuits is based on the systematic exclusion of each other's basic premises. The forced complementarity in the Soviet Union (the mechanical spirit) is explained as an anti-Enlightenment push on the part of 20th-century Soviet rulers rather than as a tension between Marxism and modern culture or between Western culture and ancient Russia. Draws the romanticist conclusion from the Russian example that the "dispiriting essence" of modern science generates incoherence when applied to human nature. CHARLES TILLY, *"Getting It Together in Burgundy, 1675-1975."* An array of first-hand accounts of of collective action in Burgundy for the last three centuries, but doesn't link this to any systematic theory. HERBERT REID, ERNEST YANARELLA, *"Critical Political Theory and Moral Development: On Kohlberg, Hampden-Turner, and Habermas."* Argues that Kohlberg remains within the tradition of autonomous rationality, attempting ultimately to ground his abstract principles in Rawls' theory of justice. Hampden-Turner accepts Kohlberg's categorical foundations and schema of moral

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development, with his most serious shortcomings being a subjectivistic conception of the self and an objectivistic understanding of the social system and technology. Habermas' notion of *Mündigkeit* in his project of communicative ethics is regarded as an attempt to build upon Kant's formalistic ethics and leads to a notion of disembodied needs. The alternative is a "critical phenomenology" of moral development, which "draws its sources from the life-world foundations of the embodied ego intentionally grounded in a socio-historical praxis oriented toward the rationality of dialectical sociality." FREDRIC JAMESON, *"Ideology, Narrative and Popular Culture."* Review essay of Will Wright's *Sixguns and Society* and John Calweti's *Adventure, Mystery and Romance.* Claims that Calweti fails to go beyond Northrop Frye's notion of archetype in developing his own concept of "formula." Because he doesn't construct a structural typology that would isolate the "deep structure" underlying the various formulas, while at the same time enumerating surface literary forms that come out of different social and historical contexts, "he ends up being neither adequately structural nor adequately historical." Wright's work is seen as a combination of two distinct types of structural analysis: that of Lévi-Strauss and Vladimir Propp. To this, Wright adds a *combinatoire* scheme, which allows for both a formal, structural reading of a text and an evaluation of it in terms of social and historical context. JOHN KEANE, *"On Turning Theory against Itself."* Review article of Jürgen Habermas, *Zur Rekonstruktion des historischen Materialismus.* Critically discusses Habermas' by now familiar criticism of Marx: "the Marxist tradition has succumbed blindly to bourgeois modernity's dismantling of the fundamental Aristotelean distinction between *techne* and *praxis.*" Claims that the basic problem in Habermas is that the dimension of work is *a priori* defined as incapable of fundamental inner reconstruction through historical processes. JOHN NELSON, *"The Ideological Connection, Part II."* A tedious journey through the twisted but intellectually simplistic labyrinths of American political science. Claims that Philip Converse's logical-psychological constraint distinction provides neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for establishing ideological connection. Argues that the question is not whether an object of study is ideological, but rather what its ideology is. Plus short book reviews. DD

Berkeley Journal of Sociology

A Critical Review

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